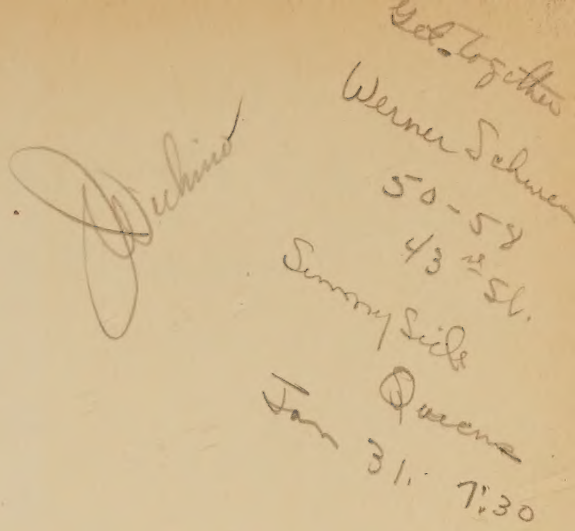
# The Book of Books

Wm. Evans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# THE BOOK OF BOOKS

*What it is; How to study it*

BY
WILLIAM EVANS, Ph. D., D.D.

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*To*
*all who love to meditate*
*upon the*
*sacred and inspired Word of God.*
*this volume*
*is*
*affectionately inscribed.*

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# PREFACE.

It is by no means claimed for this volume that it covers all that can be said upon the subject under consideration. The matter of Biblical Introduction, treated in Part I, is an exceedingly extensive one. If all the books that have been written on this one subject could be brought together, we should be led to say with the apostle of old, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain them."

It has been the purpose of the present writer to bring together in Part I, in as small a compass as possible commensurate with the great importance of the subject, all the themes considered necessary to the student of the sacred Scriptures that would naturally fall under that division of Theology known as "Isagogics," or "Biblical Introduction." Diligent recourse has been had to the latest and most authoritative works on Introduction to the Bible as a whole; Introduction to the whole or parts of the Old and New Testaments; various works on the Canon of the Scriptures; Textual Criticism, etc. It is not generally convenient, indeed not often possible, for the average student of the Bible to have recourse to such works, and yet it seems to be really necessary that he should be in touch with what has been written by the most authoritative scholars. The writer, therefore, has sought to bring together all that has been considered essential to a thorough knowledge of the subject of "Biblical Introduction." Credit has been given where quotations are made from known authorities. By the kindness of the Oxford University Press and the American Tract Society, it has been possible to present extracts from the

most noted authors in their respective lines, such as that of Dr. Briggs, of New York, on "The Languages of the Scriptures." See page 71.

Regarding Part II, "Methods of Bible Study," this much may be said: They are the methods that have resulted in the greatest profit in Bible study in the writer's own experience, and as such have been advocated by him in his teaching at The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, and at whatever conventions it has been his privilege to lecture on this subject.

It is with the earnest prayer that this book may be made a rich and lasting blessing to its readers, and that through its suggestions they may find both pleasure and profit in Bible study, that it is now sent forth on its errand.

If any soul shall learn to know God better, if the life and experience of any Christian shall be deepened, if the Bible, which heretofore may have been a dry book, shall be made a pleasure and a blessing by reason of the application of the methods for its study set forth in this volume, then God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost shall have all the praise and the glory unto the ages of the ages.

WILLIAM EVANS.

# PART I

## THE BIBLE

## WHAT IT IS

"It is the book of God. What if I should
Say, God of books!
Let him that looks
Angry at that expression, as too bold,
His thoughts in silence smother
Till he find such another."

# CHAPTER I.

## INTRODUCTION.

The Bible is, without any exception, *the most interesting book* in the world. Like other books, however, its charm will very much depend upon whether we rightly understand it or not, and know how to use its contents.

It has sometimes been asserted that the Bible is a dry and uninteresting book, and it can be readily seen how such might be the case. If people were to treat other books in the same manner they treat the Bible, there would not be an interesting book in the world. What would you think of a person taking any popular book of the day, opening it at random, reading here a little and there a little, and then saying, "This book is not interesting"? You would at once say that the book had not had a fair trial. And yet people treat the Bible in that way. They seem to think that the laws that govern its construction are different and less logical and orderly than those which govern the composition of any other worthy book. If people come to realize that the Bible is written logically, and that the Spirit, who is the Author of it, does "all things decently and in order," then we may hope that it will receive its due in this respect, and be acknowledged to be what in deed and truth it is—the most interesting book in the world.

*The Bible is a living book.* No book is an absolutely dead thing. It contains a seed of life in it. It preserves, in a greater or less degree, the intellect and life that begat

it. If this be true of all books of mere human composition, how much more is it true of the Bible—the book "given by inspiration of God"?

*The Bible has life-giving power.* As we read it, we know there is in it a Spirit that speaks to our spirit, a Life that touches our life. As we believe it, we are "born again * * * by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Even as a literary composition *the sacred Scriptures form the most remarkable book the world has ever seen.* They are of writings the most ancient. The events they contain are of the deepest interest. To their influence is due the great advance in civilization and the happiness that floods the world to-day. The wisest and best men of all ages have borne witness to their beauty and saving power.

Before reading any book, one should endeavor to gather some idea of the general aim and purpose of its contents, and thereby come to a conclusion as to whether or not it is worth reading. Sometimes its very title arouses our curiosity enough to make us read it, and still oftener the name of the writer. "What is it called?" "What is it about?" "Who is the author of it?" "What is the best way to read it?" The answer to these questions goes a good way in settling the question whether we will read the book, or not.

Now, if such a course of consideration respecting an ordinary book that is read once and perhaps never looked at again, is praiseworthy and reasonable, surely similar inquiry is more necessary and incumbent on us in the case of the Book that ought to be the study of our lives, and that ought to be read every day we live; the Book in which we find what is the will of God for us, both for this life and for that which is to come.

Let us, therefore, humbly and reverently apply these simple questions to the Bible. Let us inquire, "What is it called, and why?" "What is it, and what is it about?" "Who is its Author, and how was it written?" and "How may we best study it so as to get the most good from it?"

## CHAPTER II.

### THE BIBLE—ITS NAMES AND TITLES.

**1. "The Bible."**

Our English word *Bible* comes from the Greek words *biblos* (Matt. 1:1) and *biblion* (diminutive form) (Luke 4:17) which mean *"book."* Ancient books were written upon the biblus or papyrus reed, and from this custom came the Greek name *biblos,* which finally came to be applied to the sacred books. See Mark 12:26; Luke 3:4; 20:42; Acts 1:20; 7:42.

The Bible is not merely A book, however. It is THE BOOK—the Book that from the importance of its subjects, the wideness of its range, the majesty of its Author, stands as high above all other books as the heaven is high above the earth.

"Bring me the Book," said Sir Walter Scott, when about to die.

"What book?" said Lockhart.

"THE Book—the Bible; there is only one Book."

**2. "The Old and New Testaments."**

The word *testament* means *covenant,* and is the term by which God was pleased to designate the relation that existed between Himself and His people. The term *covenant* was first of all applied to the relation itself, and afterward to the books which contained the record of that relation. See Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6, 14; Heb. 9:15; 12:24.

By the end of the second century we find the "Old Covenant" and the "New Covenant" as the established names of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures; and Origen in the beginning of the third century, mentioned "the divine Scriptures, the so-called Old and New Covenants."

The Old Testament deals with the record of the calling and history of the Jewish nation, and as such it is the Old Covenant. The New Testament deals with the history and application of the redemption wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ, and as such is the New Covenant.

### 3. "The Scripture," and "The Scriptures,"

The Bible is also called "The Scripture" (Mark 12:10; 15:28; Luke 4:21; John 2:22; 7:38; 10:35; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 4:30; 2 Pet. 1:20), and "The Scriptures" (Matt. 22:29; Mark 12:24; Luke 24:27; John 5:39; Acts 17:11; Rom. 1:2; 2 Tim. 3:15; 2 Pet. 3:16). These terms mean that the Scriptures are "Holy Writings." By the early Christians the most common designation for the whole Bible was "The Scriptures."

### 4. "The Word of God."

Of all the names given to the Bible "The Word of God" (Mark 7:13; Rom. 10:17; 2 Cor. 2:17; Heb. 4:12; 1 Thess. 2:13) is doubtless the most significant, impressive, and complete. It is sufficient to justify the faith of the weakest Christian. It gathers up all that the most earnest search can unfold. It teaches us to regard the Bible as the utterance of divine wisdom and love—as God speaking to man.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

**1. What is Meant by the Term "Inspiration"?**

This question is best answered by Scripture itself. It defines its own terms best. Let us, then, "to the Law and to the Testimony!"

In 2 Tim. 3:16 we read as follows:

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

The word "inspired" literally means "God-breathed." It is composed of two Greek words—*theos,* meaning *God; and pnein* meaning *to breathe.* The term "given by inspiration" signifies, then, that the writings of the Old Testament, of which Paul is here speaking, are the result of a certain influence exerted by God upon their authors.

The force of the word "breathed," as used in this passage, is brought out very forcibly by the comparison of two other words translated in the same way. The one is the Greek word *psuchein,* which means *to breathe gently,* while in 2 Tim. 3:16 the term denotes a forcible respiration. The other is the Hebrew word *ah-ayrh,* which denotes *to breathe unconsciously,* while 2 Tim. 3:16 denotes a conscious breathing.

Inspiration, then, as defined by Paul in this passage, is the STRONG, CONSCIOUS INBREATHING OF GOD INTO MEN, QUALIFYING THEM TO GIVE UTTERANCE TO TRUTH. IT IS GOD SPEAKING THROUGH MEN, AND THE OLD TESTAMENT IS THEREFORE JUST AS MUCH THE WORD OF GOD AS THOUGH GOD SPAKE EVERY SINGLE WORD OF IT WITH HIS OWN LIPS. The Scriptures are the result of divine inbreathing, just

as human speech is uttered by the breathing through a man's mouth.

Another helpful suggestion regarding the Inspiration of the Scriptures is found in 2 Pet. 1:21:

"For not by the will of man was prophecy brought at any time, but being borne by the Holy Spirit, the holy men of God spoke." (This is a literal rendering, and brings out the sense more clearly.)

The participle "moved" may be translated "when moved," so this passage teaches that holy men of God wrote the Scriptures *when* moved to do so by the Holy Spirit.

Further, the participle is passive, and denotes "to be moved upon." This distinctly teaches that the Scripture was not written by mere men, or at their suggestion, but by men *moved upon*, prompted, yea indeed, driven by the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

This declaration of Peter's may be said to intimate that the Holy Ghost was especially and miraculously present with and in the writers of the Scriptures, revealing to them truths which they did not know before, and guiding them alike in their record of these truths, and of the transactions of which they were eye and ear witnesses, so that they were enabled to present them with substantial accuracy to the minds of others.

The statements of the Scriptures regarding Inspiration may be summed up as follows: Holy men of God, qualified by the infusion of the breath of God, wrote in obedience to the divine command, and were kept from all error, whether they revealed truths previously unknown or recorded truths already familiar. In this sense, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," the Bible is indeed and in truth the very Word of God, and the books of the Bible are of divine origin and authority.

## 2. The Distinction between Inspiration, Revelation, Illumination, and Verbatim Reporting.

### *1. The distinction between Inspiration and Revelation.*

It is of the greatest importance in considering the theme of Inspiration to distinguish it clearly from Revelation.

The most cursory perusal of the Scriptures reveals the fact that they consist of two different kinds of records: first, records of truth directly revealed and imparted to the mind of the writer by God, and which he could have learned in no other manner (such, for example, as the story of Creation); and second, records of events that occurred within the writer's own observation, and of sayings that fell upon his own ears (such as Moses' account of the Exodus, Paul's account of his interview with Peter at Antioch). In the one case, the writer records things that had not been revealed to man before; in the other case, he records facts which were as well known to others as to him.

Now, Revelation is that act of God by which He directly communicates truth not known before to the human mind. Revelation discovers new truth, while Inspiration superintends the communicating of that truth.

All that is in the Bible has not been "directly revealed" to man. It contains history, and the language of men, even of wicked men. But there is absolutely no part of the Bible record that is not inspired. The history recorded in the Bible is true. The sacred writers were so directed and influenced by the Spirit that they were preserved, in writing, from every error of fact and doctrine. The history remains history. Things not sanctioned by God, recorded in the Bible, are to be shunned (2 Tim. 3:16).

Nevertheless, all these things were written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is Inspiration.

This distinction should be definitely and clearly understood, for many of the most plausible arguments against the full Inspiration of the Scriptures have arisen from the fact that this has been either unrecognized or ignored.

Though all Scripture is inspired, it does not stamp with divine authority every sentiment which it reports as uttered by the men of whom it speaks, nor does it mark with divine approval every action which it relates as performed by those with whose biographies it deals. In the book of Job, for example, Inspiration gives with equal accuracy the language of Jehovah, the words of Satan, and the speeches of Job and his three friends; but it does not therefore place them all on the same level of authority. Each speaker is responsible for his own utterances. Neither Satan, Job, nor his three friends spoke by Inspiration of God. They gave utterance to their own opinions; and all that Inspiration vouches for is that no one of them is misrepresented, but that each one spoke the sentiments that are attributed to him in Scripture. So, again, the fact that David's cruelty to the Ammonites is recorded in the book of Kings does not imply that God approved it any more than He approved the king's double crime of murder and adultery, which "displeased Him." The Inspiration of the Book vouches only for the accuracy of the record.

*2. The distinction between Inspiration and Illumination.*

Spiritual Illumination refers to the influence of the Holy Ghost, common to all Christians. No statement of a truth about God or spiritual things can be understood by a man unless the Holy Spirit takes it and reveals it to

him. It is only the spiritual man who can understand spiritual things. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:14). No learning of the schools can lead him to know God. Flesh and blood cannot reveal God to men (Matt. 16:17).

There is a vast difference between "a divine revelation of the mind of God," and "a divine action on the mind of man." The former is Revelation; the latter is Spiritual Illumination.

Those who hold to the Illumination theory to account for the origin of the Bible revelation, claim that there is in every man an intuitive faculty that grasps the supernatural, that lays hold of God and spiritual things; and that whatever insight into the nature and being of God is given man, is produced by the divine Spirit playing upon this spiritual faculty in man, illuminating and irradiating it, so that it sees the perfection of God and is enabled to penetrate into His will.

According to this view, the Bible is the result of the meditations of godly men whose minds were acted upon by God. Any revelation of divinity of which man is the recipient, comes in this manner. Subjective illumination God has carried on since the world began, and is still carrying on by a great variety of methods. The Scriptures are not in any way the oracles of God, nor do they come to us as direct, logical utterances of the divine mind. The patriarchs, prophets and apostles of old so deeply meditated on God and the things of God that their spiritual faculties were enlarged and illuminated to such a degree that they conceived of these visions of God, His nature, His will, etc., as recorded in the Scriptures.

Now, it is true, doubtless, that a man may be granted a very deep insight into the nature and being of God by spiritual meditation. That a fire does burn in the

Bible, we do not deny. Throughout all ages of the Jewish and Christian church men have lit their spiritual torches at this fire, and in their light, they have seen Him who is invisible. This fire still burns, and to-day the devout student may catch its flame if, with uncovered head, with shoeless feet, and with humble spirit, he stands before the bush that ever burns and yet is never consumed. But this working of the truth of God on the mind of man is not God's revelation of His mind to man which the Bible professes to be. The Bible must of necessity be not merely a repository or receptacle of spiritual influences fitted to act upon the mind; it must be—it is—God making Himself known to men. It is God speaking to man through men.

In contradistinction to the Illumination theory we have instances in the Bible where God made revelations of Himself, His truth, and His will to men who were by no means at the time meditating upon God. For instance, Baalam (Numbers 22:34, 35), Caiaphas (John 11:49-52).

And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again. And the angel of the LORD said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak. Num. 22: 34, 35.

And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. John 11: 49–52.

*3. The Distinction Between Inspiration and Verbatim Reporting.*

Inspiration is not necessarily Verbatim Reporting.

It is not absolutely necessary to make such a claim to prove the Inspiration of the Scriptures. Verbatim Reporting is, in a sense, a mere mechanical operation. It would have robbed the writers of their individuality, and made them mere machines. But no; the Holy Spirit used the memories, the intuitions, the judgments, and indeed the idiosyncrasies of the writers, so that while each recorded that part of the event or discourse which (as we may express it) adhered to himself, he was enabled to give it with substantial accuracy.

### 3. Various Theories of Inspiration.

It will be in order here to note briefly various theories of Inspiration; for it must be known that all students do not agree as to the degree of inspiration that characterized the writers of the Scripture. When a man says, "I believe in the Inspiration of the Bible," it will be quite in place in these days to ask him what he means by Inspiration. Following are some of the views of Inspiration held at the present day.

#### 1. *Natural Inspiration.*

This theory identifies Inspiration with genius of a high order. It denies that there is anything supernatural, mysterious, or peculiar in the mode of the Spirit's operation in and upon the Scripture writers. It claims that they were no more inspired than were Milton, Shakspeare, Mahomet, or Confucius.

Such a theory we absolutely reject. For if such be the character of the Inspiration possessed by the Scripture writers, there is nothing to assure us that they were not liable to make the same errors, to teach the same false

views of life, to give expression to the same uncertainties concerning the past, the present and the future as did these shining lights of mere human genius.

When David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue," he meant something more than the prayer which forms the gem of *Paradise Lost.* When Isaiah and his brethren said, "Thus saith the Lord," they claimed something higher than that they were speaking under the stirrings of poetic rapture. When Paul said to the Corinthians, "Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth (1 Cor. 2:13)," he used language to which you will find no parallel in the literature of mere human genius. And no man of candor or intelligence can pass from the writings even of the unapproachable Shakspeare into the perusal of the Bible without feeling that the difference between the two is not one simply of degree, but of kind; he has not merely ascended to a loftier outlook in the same human dwelling, but he has gone into a new region altogether. There is a certain "unknown quality" in this Book which clearly distinguishes it from all others; and if we may take its own explanation of the matter, that unknown quality is its divine Inspiration.

2. *Universal Christian Inspiration, or Illumination.* (*See page 19.*)

According to this theory, the Inspiration of the Bible writers was the same as has characterized Christians of every age; the ordinary Christian of to-day is inspired as much as was the apostle Paul.

If this be the true view, there seems to be no plausible reason why a new Bible should not be possible to-day. And yet no individual, however extreme his claims to Inspiration may be, has even ventured such a task.

*3. Mechanical, or Dynamic, Inspiration.* (*See Verbatim Reporting, page 21.*)

This theory ignores the human instrumentality in the writing of the Scriptures altogether, and claims that the writers were passive instruments, mere machines, just as insensible to what they were accomplishing as is the string of the harp or lyre to the play of the musician.

How then do we account for the differences in style of the various writers, the preservation of their individualities, their idiosyncrasies?

It seems evident that Scripture cannot be made to harmonize with the application of this theory.

*4. Concept, or Thought Inspiration.*

This theory claims that only the concepts, or thoughts, of men were given by Inspiration. It will be examined more fully later. Concept inspiration is opposed by

*5. Verbal Inspiration.*

Here it is claimed that the very words of Scripture were given by the Holy Spirit; that the writers were not left absolutely to themselves in the choice of words they should use. (See page 25.)

*6. Partial Inspiration.*

The favorite way of expressing this theory is, "The Bible *contains* the Word of God."

This statement implies that it contains much that is *not* the Word of God, that is, that is not inspired. A serious question at once arises: Who is to decide what is and what is not inspired? Who is to be the judge of so vital

a question? What part is inspired, and what part is not? Who can tell?

Such a theory leaves man in awful and fatal uncertainty.

### 7. *Plenary, or Full, Inspiration.*

This is the opposite of Partial Inspiration. It holds all Scripture to be equally inspired, as stated on page 24. It bases its claim on 2 Tim. 3:16.

Here let it be said that the Revised Version translation of 2 Tim. 3:16 is greviously erroneous and unsafe. The reader might infer from it that there is some Scripture that is not inspired.

1. If Paul had said, "All Scripture that is divinely inspired is ALSO profitable, etc.," he would virtually have said, "There is *some* Scripture, *some* part of the Bible, that is *not profitable, etc.*, and therefore is not inspired." This is what the spirit of rationalism wants, namely, to make human reason the test and judge and measure of what is inspired and what is not. One man says such and such a verse is not profitable to him, another says such and such a verse is not profitable to him; a third says such and such is not profitable to him. The result is that no Bible is left.

2. Is it possible that anyone need be told the flat and sapless tautology that all divinely-inspired Scripture is *also* profitable? Paul dealt in no such meaningless phrases. The word translated *also* does not mean *also* here. It means *and*. Its position in the sentence shows this.

3. Again, the Revised rendering is shown to be openly false because the revisers refused to render the same Greek construction elsewhere in the same way, which convicts them of error.

In Hebrew 4:13 we have: "All things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." The form and construction are identical with those of 2 Tim. 3:16. Were we, however, to translate this passage as the Revisers translated the passage in Timothy, it would read: "All naked things are also open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." All naked things are also open things! All uncovered things are also exposed things! There is no *also* in the case.

Again, 1 Tim. 4:4: "Every creature of God is good and nothing is to be rejected." According to the principles the revisers adopted in rendering 2 Tim. 3:16, this passage would read: "Every good creature of God is also nothing to be rejected."

The Greek language has no such meaningless syntax. The place of the verb *is*,—which must be supplied,—is directly before the word "inspired," and not after it.

The great rationalistic scholar, DeWette, confessed candidly that the rendering the revisers here adopted cannot be defended. In his German version of the text, he gave the sense thus: "Every sacred writing, i. e., of the canonical Scriptures, is inspired of God and is useful for doctrine, etc." Bishops Moberly and Wordsworth, Archbishop Trench, and others of the Revision committee, disclaimed any responsibility for the rendering. Dean Burgon pronounced it "the most astonishing as well as calamitous literary blunder of the age." It was condemned by Dr. Tragelles, the only man ever pensioned by the British government for scholarship.

In accordance with this weight of testimony, therefore, we hold to the rendering of the Authorized Version, and claim that all Scripture is equally and fully inspired of God.

## 4. The Claims of Scripture to Inspiration.

That the writers of the Scriptures claimed to write under the direct influence of the Spirit of God there can be no doubt. The *quality* or *degree* of their inspiration may be called into question, but surely not the *fact* of it. Let us examine the testimony of the writers themselves.

### 1. *The claims of Old Testament Writers to Inspiration. (We use the word Inspiration here as including Revelation.)*

Compare and examine the following passages:

And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee; and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth, and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. Ex. 4: 10-15.

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. Deut. 4: 2.

But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. Jer. 1: 7-9.

And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. Ezek. 3: 4.

But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin. Micah 3: 8.

These are but a few of the many passages in which the inspiration of the writers is affirmed and claimed.

Note further that the words "God said" occur ten times in the first chapter of Genesis. Such expressions as "The Lord said," "The Lord spake," "The word of the Lord came," are found 3,808 times, it has been calculated, in the Old Testament. These writers who claimed to be the revealers of the will of God, almost always commenced their messages with the words, "Thus saith the Lord." That they were not deceived in their claims is evident from the minuteness and detail as to names, times and places which characterized their messages, and from the literal fulfillment of these oracles of God.

*2. The claims of New Testament writers to Inspiration.*

It is worthy of note here to observe that Inspiration is claimed by New Testament writers for Old Testament writers as well as for themselves. Read and compare the following passages:

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Peter 1: 20, 21.

Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 1 Peter 1: 10, 11.

Men *and* brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. Acts 1: 16.

And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers . . . Acts 28: 25.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1 Cor. 2: 13.

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. 1 Cor. 14: 37.

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. 1 Thess. 2. 13.

This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. 2 Peter 3: 1, 2.

For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Matt. 10: 20.

But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Mark 13: 11

For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say. Luke 12: 12.

Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. Luke 21: 14, 15.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2. 4.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. Acts 4: 31.

It is evident from these and many other passages of Scripture that the writers of both the Old and New Testaments were conscious of having received revelations from God, and considered themselves inspired of God to write the Scriptures, and felt while writing that they were giving expression to the infallible truth of God, and were conscious that the Holy Spirit was moving them to the work.

**5. What is the Nature of the Inspiration that characterized the Writers of the Scriptures, and in What Degree Were They Under Its Influence?**

Much has been said and written in answer to this question. Were the *thoughts* or *concepts* alone inspired, or were the *words* also inspired? Were the words dictated by the Holy Spirit, or were the writers left to choose their own words? These are the knotty questions current today regarding the Inspiration of the Bible. We may say with certainty that

*1. At least some of the words of Scripture are the identical words written or spoken by God Himself.*

Note Exodus 32:16—"The writing was the writing of God"; Exodus 31:18—"Written with the finger of God." Compare also Deuteronomy 10:2, 4; 9:10; Exodus 24:12. See also 1 Chronicles 28:19 (R. V.)—"All this, said David, have I been made to understand in writing from the hand of Jehovah"; Daniel 5:5—"There came forth the finger of a man's hand and wrote * * * "

In the New Testament God is heard speaking both at the baptism and the transfiguration of Jesus, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."

It is clearly evident from these passages that some part of the inspired record claims to be a record of the exact words of God.

*2. It is also very definitely stated in Scripture that God put into the mouths of certain men the very words they should speak, and told them what they should write.*

And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant:

but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom* thou wilt send. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is* not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. Ex. 4: 10–15.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. Ex. 34:27.

Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of *their* fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers, twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod *shall be* for the head of the house of their fathers. Num. 17: 2, 3.

And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. Deut. 6:9.

And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates. Deut. 11:20.

Moreover the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz. For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy. to all *them to* whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Isa. 8: 1, 11, 12.

But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Jer. 1:7.

Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. Jer. 5: 14.

Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. Jer. 7: 27.

Therefore thou shall speak unto them this word; This saith the LORD God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine: and they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine? Jer. 13: 12.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. Jer. 30:1, 2.

And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book. When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD. . Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned. And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not. Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words. Jer. 36:1, 2, 4, 11, 27–32.

And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they *are* most rebellious. Ezek 2:7.

Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. Ezek. 3:10, 11.

Son of man, write thee the name of the day, *even* of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day. Ezek. 24:2.

Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then

take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and *for* all the house of Israel his companions. Ezek. 37: 16.

And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make *it* plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. Hab. 2: 2.

And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts *as* an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. Zech. 7: 8–12.

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. I Cor. 14: 37.

Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks . . . And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive . . . And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges . . . And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass. Rev. 2: 1, 8, 12, 18.

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead . . . And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth . . . And unto the angel of the church true of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. Rev. 3: 1, 7, 14.

And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. Rev. 10: 4.

To sum up these two arguments, then, let us say, regarding the nature of the Inspiration of the sacred writings, that part of them claims to be the very words and

writings of God Himself, spoken by His own mouth, written by His own hand: that another part claims to be the record of words spoken to certain men who wrote them down just as they were spoken.

And yet if this is all that is involved in Inspiration, shall we not be robbed of a very beautiful and helpful fact, namely, that the Holy Spirit saw fit to preserve the characteristics of the writers? Do not the works of James, the faith of Paul, and the love of John appeal to us in their own peculiar way? This leads us to say that

3. *In a certain sense, and in respect to some parts of the Scripture, the authors were (humanly speaking) left to choose their own words in relating divine truth.*

This was by no means true of all the sacred writings. There are instances recorded of men who spoke without knowing what they were saying; and of men and animals speaking without knowledge of the substance of their message. See John 11:49-52; Numbers 22:28-30; Daniel 12:8,9.

And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. John 11:49-52.

And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. And the ass said unto Balaam, *Am* not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since *I was* thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay. Num. 22:28-30.

And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things?* And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Dan. 12:8, 9.

And yet the gift of inspiration admitted of personal, diligent, and faithful research into the facts recorded—Luke 1:1-4. It allowed the expression of the same thought in different words, such differences (by no means discrepancies) between the accounts of inspired men as would be likely to arise from the different standpoint of each.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. Matt. 26: 26, 27.

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and break *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. Luke 22: 19, 20.

And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. 1 Cor. 11: 24, 25.

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matt. 3: 17.

And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Mark. 1: 11.

And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. Luke 3: 22.

The Spirit employed the attention, the investigation, the memory, the fancy, the logic, in a word, all the faculties of the writer, and wrought through these. He guided the writer to choose what narrative and materials, speeches of others, imperial decrees, genealogies, official letters, state papers or historical matter he found necessary for the recording of the divine message of salvation. He wrought in and with and through their spirits, so as to preserve their individuality to others. He used the men themselves,

and spoke through their individualities. The gold was His; the mould was theirs.

If the question be asked whether or not Inspiration affected the words, it must be answered in the affirmative. It is hardly possible that Inspiration could insure the correct transmission of thought without in some way affecting the words. Yet it affected the words not directly and immediately by dictating them in the ears of the writers, but mediately, through working on their minds and producing there such vivid and clear ideas of thoughts and facts that the writers could find words fitted to their purpose.

We must conclude, therefore, that while from the divine side the Holy Spirit gave through men clearly and faithfully that which He wished to communicate, from the human side that communication came forth in language such as men themselves would naturally have chosen.

This may seem to some to be an impossibility, and they would allege that if the words were affected by Inspiration at all, there must have been dictation. But the *must* is a "non sequitur." It is admitted that God works His purposes in the world through the ordinary actions of men, while yet no violence is done to their freedom. It is admitted, also, that God, through the gracious operations of His Holy Spirit, works in the hearts of His people so as to develop in each of them the new man, while yet the individuality of each is preserved; and the type of piety is just as distinct in each Christian as the style is in each of the sacred writers. These cases are so nearly parallel as to suggest that all denials of the possibility of Inspiration without the destruction of the individual characteristics are as unphilosophical as they are unwarranted.

We may therefore safely say that we believe in Plenary and Verbal Inspiration—that is to say, the words as well

as the thoughts have been given, whether mediately or immediately, under the influence of the divine Spirit. We claim that the Bible is in deed and in truth the very Word of God; that it is the Word of God in the language of men; truly divine, and at the same time truly human; that it is the revelation of God to His creatures; that infallible guidance was given to those who wrote it, so as to preserve them from error in the statement of facts; that what the writers of the Scriptures say or write under this guidance is as truly said and written by God as if their instrumentality were not used at all; that the ideas expressed therein are the very ideas the Holy Ghost intended to convey; that God is in the fullest sense responsible for every word. This is what the Bible claims for itself.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Define Inspiration.
2. Quote from memory the Bible passages that prove Inspiration, giving the references.
3. What is the distinction between Inspiration, Revelation, Illumination, and Verbatim Reporting?
4. Give a brief statement of various theories of Inspiration.
5. Which is the true theory? In what sense may "verbal" and "plenary" be applied to the Scriptures?
6. What claims do the Scriptures themselves make with regard to Inspiration?
7. To what part of our Bible does 2 Timothy 3:16 refer?
8. Quote at least three passages in the Scriptures which designate God as speaking or writing directly.
9. Quote at least three passages which designate God as giving the very words that men should speak or write.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE.

"The integrity of the records of the Christian faith is substantiated by evidence in a ten-fold more proportion—more various, copious, and conclusive—than that which can be adduced in support of any other ancient writings."—*Isaac Taylor.*

It is a matter of the greatest importance to know whether the writings that have come down to us under the name of the Old and New Testaments are in the same state in which their authors left them, or whether they have been added to, altered or abridged; that is, whether the books of the Bible, as we have them at the present day, are *genuine* and *authentic.*

To prove that the Scriptures are both genuine and authentic is the purpose of this chapter.

**1. Definitions.**

There is a distinction between the two terms *genuineness* and *authenticity.* A *genuine* work is one written by the man whose name its bears; an *authentic* work is one which relates truthfully the matters of which it treats.

For example, there is extant an apocryphal gospel purporting to have been written by St. Thomas. This work is not "genuine," for Thomas did not write it; it is not "authentic," for its contents are mainly fables and lies.

If we had in our possession to-day a manuscript of the book of Galatians in the author's own handwriting, and if the fact of its being so could be proven beyond the shadow of a doubt, and if, on comparison, the book of

Galatians, as we have it in our English Bible, was found to agree with this manuscript as to its title and contents, then the book of Galatians would be both "genuine" and "authentic."

A book is said to be *forged* or *spurious* when not written by the author whose name it bears; it is said to be *corrupt* when the present text varies from the original.

When, therefore, we speak of the genuineness of the Bible, we mean that the books composing it were written by the men whose names they bear. When we speak of the authenticity of the Bible, we mean that the contents of these books are the same as the originals—unadulterated, unaltered. The Bible is "genuine" inasmuch as the books that compose it are the same as they were when written by the men who were inspired of God to write them. The text is not "corrupt," because it does not vary in any essential particular from that which was recorded by the inspired penmen. It is not "forged" or "spurious," because the many books composing it were actually written under divine direction by the very men whose names they bear, or to whom the authorship is ascribed; they were not written by other persons at later dates and palmed off on the world as being productions of others.

The genuineness and authenticity of the Bible need not be accepted by faith alone. They rest upon evidences. If, therefore, it can be proven by credible evidence that the Bible, as we now have it, is precisely the same as when written by the men whose names it bears, then its genuineness and authenticity are accredited and indisputable facts.

### 2. Why is this Fact Questioned?

Why is the fact that the Bible is the very Word of God and comes to us in the identical form in which it was

written, disputed and questioned? Truly it seems startling to those who have felt the warmth, the glow, the divinity and the inspiration of its life-giving words, that there should be the slightest hesitancy touching the acceptance of its claims. But so it is; and we must endeavor to ascertain the reasons for this doubt, and seek, as best we can, to show that they are without foundation.

Among the most important are:

1. *The supposed lack of harmony between the Bible and Science.*

Even some firm friends of the Bible show apprehension when the Bible and science are compared. But there is no real fear. All attacks against the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture will, like the waves that beat against Gibralter, but cut themselves in two and be hurled back upon themselves.

The Bible does not profess to be a text-book on science Its aim is to teach not scientific but spiritual truth. Certain scientific facts may be discovered by intelligent and industrious men, and hence need no revelation. But our origin, our destiny, our relation to God, the link between the present and the future, the things touching the life that is to come, these are things that man by searching cannot find out, and hence are proper subjects of revelation. With such the Bible aims to deal. Other truths are but illustrative of these great and primal facts. "The Bible is not a treatise on geology or astronomy. You do not go to it to master the science of numbers, or the principles of graphic art. You cannot learn from it the laws of Kepler concerning the planetary motions, or the laws of chemistry relating to the combination of elements. The Bible was not intended for a cyclopedia in which you may find every ascertained fact, nor for a university where you may

traverse every department of science. You keep the Bible in your houses, but you send your children to the public schools, and wisely. For, while there is no question that a great deal more of Scripture, put into our education, would make of us a stronger and better nation, and might well be substituted for much laboriously acquired secular knowledge, still, God's Word was never intended to take the place of those studies into which men are led by their physical, social and intellectual needs. The Holy Scriptures were given to be the religious hand-book of mankind. They are profitable for instruction in righteousness, but not necessarily for instruction in the nebular hypothesis. Much of the misconception about the Bible springs from unscriptural claims that have been made for it. Its perfection as a spiritual guide may be maintained without asking the world to look upon it as a depository of all knowledge."

"The Bible must be judged by its primary purpose, which is to teach spiritual truth, and not science. Hence it seems plausible that in using illustrations from the kingdom of nature, it should state things as they appear to be, and not as they really are, just as we do to-day. We are well aware that the sun is the center of the solar system, and that the earth revolves around it; yet we speak of the sun rising in the east, and setting in the west. We speak of the dew as descending from heaven, while the real fact is that the atmosphere gives up its vapor to the touch of a colder surface, as a pitcher of ice water collects and condenses the moisture from the air. When, therefore, the writers of Scripture make use of expressions which fit appearances and not realities, which agree more with popular impressions than with scientific accuracy, this by no means involves any real discrepancy or contradiction. And surely every day is revealing the fact that there

is no real discrepancy between the real discoveries of true science and the Bible." (A. T. Pierson).

*2. The supposed contradiction in numbers.**

It is recorded in 1 Samuel 6:19, for example, that at Bethshemesh, a small town, the Lord smote 50,070 men; and in Judges 12:6 there are said to have fallen of the Ephraimites 42,000, while a short time before the tribe contained only 32,500 persons.

Both passages are corrected by a mode of notation still common among the Arabians. They say, "In the year 12 and 300," for "312." Translating literally, we have for the passage in Samuel, "The Lord smote seventy men, fifties, and a thousand," or 1,170; and for the second, "There fell of the Ephraimites 40 and 2,000," or 2,040.

Again, the similarity in Hebrew letters would account for some of the seeming discrepancies. For example: In Hebrew א is 1; אּ is 1,000; ב is 2; כ is 20; אֲ stands for 7,000, ז for 700. This being the case, it can be seen how possible and probable it was that the transcriber could inadvertently substitute one letter for another, thus causing a discrepancy in numbers. Compare 2 Samuel 10:18 with 1 Chronicles 19:18; 2 Samuel 8:4 with 1 Chronicles 18:4.

### 3. The Genuineness and Authenticity of the Bible Proved.

How do we know that the Bible, as we have it to-day, is both genuine and authentic? What method of proof shall we pursue to substantiate this claim? How can we demonstrate that the books of the Bible were written by the men whose names they bear, and that the text of the Scripture has not been corrupted?

*From Angus' *Bible Handbook*.

It is our purpose to set forth this proof in such a way as to satisfy the honest enquirer; dishonest doubters no one can satisfy

*1. Can the original manuscripts be produced?*

Can we lay our hands on any one of the original manuscripts? The answer to this question must, for the present at least, be in the negative. No, we have not in our possession any of the original manuscripts. This does not mean, however, that it is not possible for them yet to be found. They may still be in existence, and may yet be found.

If the question be asked, Why have they not been found, we say in reply:

(a.) They are evidently not necessary in God's purpose, else they would have been preserved.

(b.) Men might have worshipped them. If people worship a piece of bone, or a lock of hair belonging to a saint, or a piece of wood purporting to be a part of the cross on which Christ died; if the Israelites worshipped the brazen serpent (for which reason God commanded it to be destroyed, 2 Kings 18:4), is it not probable that they would also have worshipped the original manuscripts if they had been found? Doubtless for this reason the ark, the rod of Aaron, the pot of manna, the tables of stone on which were written the commandments, and other things used in the religious experience of Israel, have been hidden from man's view for so many centuries (see Hebrews 9:4).

*2. If the original manuscripts are not obtainable, or not in existence, how then can we prove the Genuineness and Authenticity of the Bible?*

This is not so difficult a task as it at first may seem to be. Scholars to-day are willing to admit the genuineness and authenticity of classical works,—Virgil, for example, —notwithstanding that none of the original writings are known to be in existence, all having been presumably lost or destroyed. If ten, or at the most twenty, manuscripts (copies only of the original work) can be found to-day that agree as to the claims and matter of any classical work, it is considered sufficient proof of its genuineness and authenticity.

Virgil lived at about the time of our Lord. The oldest copy of Virgil, which is in possession of the Vatican library in Rome, dates from the fourth century, and was written more than 300 years after his death. The manuscripts of most other classical writers, which are accepted as genuine, date from the tenth to the fifteenth century.

Contrast with this the number and dates of the manuscripts of the Scriptures! Hundreds of copies are now in existence. We shall see later that two men collected 1,964 Bible manuscripts.

Our method of proof will be to trace through the centuries the history of the Scripture records.

*a. Printed copies of the Scriptures.*

Printed copies of the Scripture are extant to-day, dating as far back as the middle of the fifteenth century.

In the library of Exeter College, Oxford, there is a copy of the Old Testament in Hebrew, dated A. D. 1488. In the Royal Library, Berlin, there is a Hebrew copy of the Old Testament, dated A. D. 1494. It was from this copy that Luther made his German translation of the Scriptures. There are extant printed copies of the New Testament in Greek, dated Basil, A. D. 1516, and edited by Erasmus; in Latin, dated A. D. 1514. These printed

copies, on being compared, agree in the main with the printed copies of the Scriptures we possess to-day, and thus prove, by a single step, the Old and New Testament, in the form we have them now, *to have existed four hundred years ago.*

*b. Manuscripts.*

The printed copies of the Bible take us back to the middle of the fifteenth century; the manuscripts take us back to the middle of the fourth century.

At the time these Bibles were printed, there were in possession of certain scholars over 2,000 manuscripts. Kennicott collected 630, and DeRossi 734 more, for the critical edition of the Hebrew Bible. Upwards of 600 more were collected for the edition of the Greek Testament. This was certainly a sufficient number to establish the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred text. If scholars are willing to accept ten or twenty copies at most of any classical writer as proving the genuineness and authenticity of his writings, how much more ought they be willing to admit the same for the sacred Scriptures with 2,000 or more manuscripts! These have served the purpose of restoring the text to its original purity, and also give us assured certainty and protection against future corruption.

Most of these manuscripts were written between 1000 and 1500 A. D. Some date as far back as the eighth and ninth century. A few go as far back as the fourth century. That they date no earlier than the fourth century is doubtless accounted for by the fact that in the year A. D. 302 the Emperior Diocletian ordered the wholesale destruction of the sacred books.

Another fact worthy of note in this connection is that in the year A. D. 330, fifty large and carefully prepared copies of the Scriptures were made by order of the Em-

peror Constantine for the use of the churches of Constantinople. This may account for the continuous and increasing stream of manuscripts for the thousand years subsequent to A. D. 303.

These manuscripts contain but parts of the Scriptures, and yet when put together we can secure the full text. Some, indeed, contain the New Testament in full.

The manuscripts are divided into two classes:

1. Uncial, (from the Latin *uncia,* inch), so-called because they were written in large capital letters on fine vellum, or on prepared skins of calves and kids. They are the earlier manuscripts.

2. Later than these come the "Cursive" manuscripts, so called from being written in a cursive or running hand.

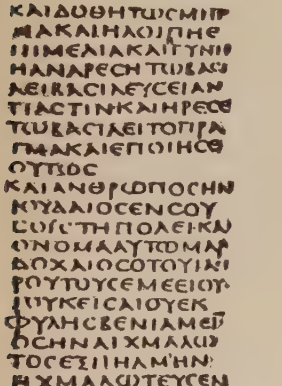
### THE UNCIAL MANUSCRIPTS.

Of the Greek Uncial manuscripts the most important are the following:

1. *The Sinaitic,* or Codex Sinaiticus, dating from the fourth century, and known by the sign ℵ. It is in the St. Petersburg Library in Russia, and was discovered by Tischendorf in St. Catherine's convent on Mt. Sinai in the year 1859. This manuscript is in book form, having four columns on a page, except the poetical books, which have but two columns on a page.

The story of its discovery is most remarkable. Dr. Tischendorf, a famous German scholar, devoted his life to searching for and studying ancient manuscripts of the Bible. In 1844 he visited St. Catherine's convent at the foot of Mt. Sinai, when he made a fortunate discovery. In the hall of the convent there stood a basket filled with parchments ready for the fire, and he was told two similar basketfuls had been burned.

On examining the contents of the basket he was surprised to find parchment leaves of the Greek Old Testament, the most ancient he had ever seen. He was unable to conceal his joy, and was allowed to take away one-third, or about forty-three sheets. Though the lot was destined for the fire, his joy at his discovery roused the suspicions of the monks, and led them to think that perhaps the manuscripts were valuable, and so they would not give him any more. Tischendorf deposited the portion in the Royal Library at Leipzig, to which he gave the name of "*Codex* Frederick Augustus" in acknowledgment of the patronage given to him by the King of Saxony.



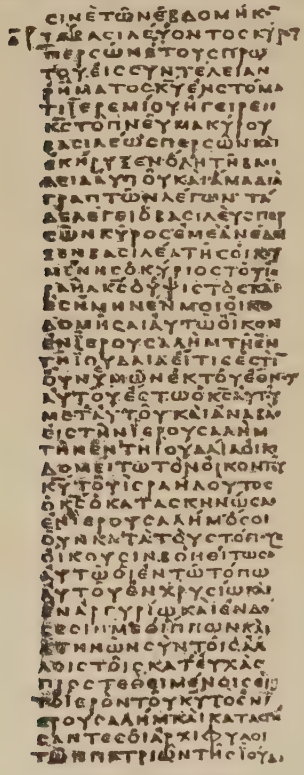
CODEX SINAITICUS.

(Esther ii. 3-8)—Fourth or Fifth century.

But in the year 1859 he was again at the convent, armed with a commission from the Russian emperor. His visit promised to be a failure, and he was about to depart without having made any fresh discovery, but on the evening before he had arranged to leave, he was walking in the grounds with the steward of the convent, who asked him into his cell to take some refreshments. As they conversed, the monk produced

a bundle wrapped in red cloth. To his great delight Tischendorf found not only some of the fragments which he had seen before, but other parts of the Old Testament, and the New Testament complete, and some other writings besides.

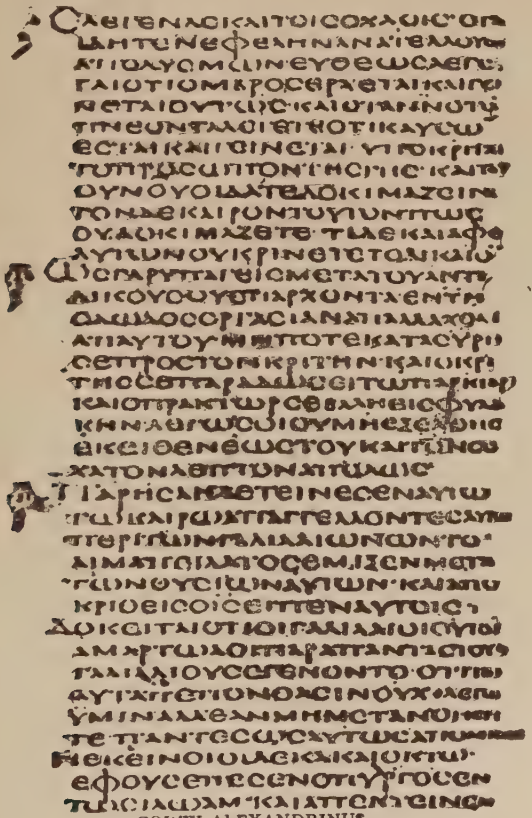
After a while, through the influence of the emperor, the manuscript was obtained from the convent and brought to the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg, in which it now rests, and it has become the most precious treasure in the possession of the Greek church.



CODEX VATICANUS.
(1 Esdras ii. 1-8)—Fourth century.

2. *The Vatican* manuscript, known as B, and Codex Vaticanus. It is written in Greek and dates back to the fourth century, and is now in possession of the Vatican Library at Rome. It is a quarto volume, consisting at present of 759 leaves of fine vellum, written (except the poetical books of the Old Testament) in three columns to a page. It contains almost the whole Bible, but very little being missing. The books are arranged in the following order: Genesis to 2 Chronicles, Esdras 1 and 2, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Job, Wisdom, Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobit, Twelve Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch. Lamentations,

Epistle of Jeremey, Ezekiel, Daniel, Gospels, Acts, catholic epistles, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews. Of the books of the Bible as we now have them, it lacks 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Revelation.



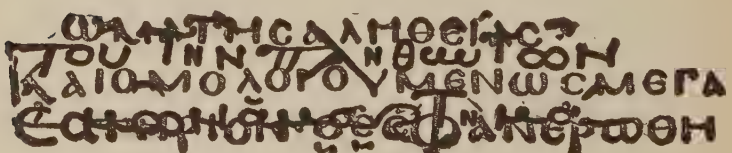
CODEX ALEXANDRINUS.

(St. Luke xii. 54–xiii. 4)—Fifth century.

(British Museum, Royal MS. r. D. v–viii.)

3. *The Alexandrian* manuscript, known as A. It was written in Greek, and dates from the fifth century. It was given by Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople, to Charles I of England, in 1628. It is now in the possession of the British Museum, in London. It contains the whole Bible except Genesis 14:14-17; 15:1-5, 16-19; 16:6-9; 1 Kings 12:18-14:9; Psalms 49 (50):20 to 70 (80):11; Matthew 1:1-25:6; John 6:50-8:52; 2 Corinthians 4:13-12:7. Revelation is followed by two epistles of Clement.

4. *The Ephraem* manuscript, known as C (fifth century). This is now in the Paris library. It is described as a "Codex rescriptus," or palimpsest, which means that it bears evidence of having been taken to pieces, the separate sheets of vellum sponged over to obliterate the original writing, and a certain number of the sheets used again to receive a Greek translation of some words of Ephraem, the Syrian. In the year 1453 it passed into the hands of Catherine de Medici. At her death it became the property of the French Royal Library. At that time its real value was not known. In 1734 it was chemically treated to intensify the ancient writing—on the whole with good effect. After ten months of hard labor an edition of it was published by Tischendorf. It contains fragments of the Septuagint, and about three-fifths of the New Testament, including parts of almost every book.



CODEX EPHRAEM (PORTION OF 1 TIM. iii. 16).

Uncial Manuscripts of the New Testament, their dates, contents, where preserved, when and by whom collated and published. (From Angus' *Bible Hand-book.*)

| Present Mark. | Name. | Where preserved. | Contents. | Date. — Century. | Published. — If so, when. | General character of the text, and chief collat's. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Codex Alexandrinus.. | Br. Mus. London..... | Old and New Testament; defective. | 5th..... | 1786-1819. Woide. Baber. | Const. in Gos. Alex. elsewhere. |
| B. | " Vaticanus, 1209 | Vat. Lib. Rome..... | Old and New Testament; defective. | 4th..... | In progress..... | Alex. Hug. Lach. Sch. Tisch. |
| C. | " Regius or Ephræmi. | Roy. Lib. Paris ..... | Old and New Testament; defective. | 6th..... | 1843, Tisch..... | Alex. Wets. Gries. Tisch. |
| D. | " Bezæ or Cantabrig. | Univ. Lib. Cambridge. | Gospels, Acts, part of Epistles; defective. | 5th or 7th | 1793, Dr. Kipling.... | Mill. Wetstein. |
| D. | " Claromontanus | Roy. Lib. Paris..... | Other Epistles; defective. | 8th..... | ..... | Wets. |
| E. | " Basileensis .... | Pub. Lib. Basle ..... | Gospels; defective.... | 9th..... | ..... | C'ns. W'ts. S'h. T'h. |
| E. | " Laudianus..... | Bod. Lib. Oxford..... | Acts; defective..... | 7th or 8th | 1715..... | Mill; used by Bede. |
| E. | " San Germanensis. | Imp. Lib. Petersburg.. | Paul's Epistles; imperfect. | 11th..... | ..... | Mill. Semler. |
| F. | " Boreeli..... | Lib. Utrecht..... | Gospels; defective.... | 9th..... | Tisch.; its readings by Vincke, 1843. | Const. Col. for Wetstein. |
| F. | " Coislianus..... (H* in Griesb.) | Roy. Lib. Paris..... | Part Old Testament, Acts 9: 24. 5. | 7th..... | Tisch..... | Const. |
| F. | " Augiensis..... | Tr. Col. Cambridge.... | Paul's Epistles..... | 9th or 10th | ..... | Alex. Wets. Tisch. |
| G. | " Harleianus, Seidelii, or Wolfii A. | Br. Mus. London..... | Gospels; defective.... | 11th..... | ..... | Cons. Wolf. Tisch. |
| G. | " Angelicus..... | Angel. Lib. Rome..... | Acts, Epistles; Paul's Epistles called I. | 9th..... | ..... | Birch. Sch. |
| G. | " Boernerianus.. | Elect. Lib. Dresden.... | Paul's Epistles, except Hebrews. | 9th..... | Matthæi, 1791..... | Like Cod. Augiensis. Hahn. |
| H. | " Wolfii B..... | Hamburg..... | Gospels; defective.... | 11th..... | ..... | Const. Wolf. |
| H. | " Mutinensis..... | Modena ..... | Acts, part of..... | Var. dates, 9th-15th | ..... | Scholz. |
| H. | " Coislianus..... | Roy. Lib. Paris..... | Parts of Paul's Epistles | 6th..... | Published by Montfaucon. | Wets. Griesb. |
| I. | " Cottonianus.... | Br. Mus. Lond..... | Part of Matthew and John. | 7th or 8th | Readings by Usher. | |
| I. | " Mosquensis .... | Lib. Moscow..... | Epistles ..... | 9th..... | Tisch. Mon. Med. | Matthæi. Simon for Mill. |

Uncial Manuscripts of the New Testament, etc.—*Continued.*

| Present Mark. | Name. | Where preserved. | Contents. | Date. — Century. | Published. — If so, when. | General character of the text, and chief collat's. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| K. | Codex Cyprius or Reg., 63. | Roy. Lib. Paris | Gospels | 8th or 9th | | Alex. Sch. Tisch. |
| L. | " Regius, 62 | " " | Gospel's; defective | 9th | Tisch. Mon. | Alex. Griesb. |
| M. | " Regius, 48 | " " | Gospels | 10th | | Alex. Sch. Tisch. |
| N. | " Vindobonensis. Cæsareus (part, probably, of I.). | Imp. Lib. Vienna | Luke 24. 13–21, 39, 49 | 7th | Tisch. Mon. | Col. by Alter Tisch |
| O. | " Montefalconii | | Luke 18 | | | Wetst. Griesb. |
| O. | " (Tisch.) Mosquensis, 120. | Moscow | Part of John | 9th | Matth. 1785 | Tischendorf. |
| P. | " Guelpherbytanus, A., rescr. | Lib. Wolfenbuttel | Gospels; defective | 6th | 1763, Knittel. | |
| Q. | " Guelpherbytanus, B., rescr. | " " | Luke and John; defective. | 6th | " | |
| R. | " Tubingensis | Tubingen | John 1. 38–50 | 7th | By Reuss, 1778 | Wetstein. |
| R. | " (Tisch) Neapolitanus. | | Part of Gospels | 8th | | Tisch. |
| S. | " Vaticanus, 354 | Vat. Rome | Gospels | 10th | | Const. Birch. |
| T. | " Borgianus | Veletri | Part of John | 4th or 5th | 1789, by Georgi | Al'x. Georgi. B'ch. |
| U. | " Venetianus, or Nanianus. | St. Mark's Lib. Venice | Gospels | 10th | | Const Birch. Sch. Tisch. |
| V. | " Mosquensis | Lib. Moscow | Gospels; imperfect | Var. dates, 9th & 13th | | Const. Gross Matthæi. |
| W. | " Regius, 314 | Roy. Lib. Paris | Part of Luke | 8th | | Alex. for Gries. & by Schol. Tisch. |
| X. | " Landshutensis, or Monacensis | Munich | Gospels; defective | 10th | | Alex. Sch. Tisch. |
| Y. | " Barberinus | Lib. Barb. Rome | Part of John | 9th | Tisch. Mon. | " " |
| Z. | " Dublinensis, rescri. | Tr. Col. Dublin | Matthew; defective | 6th | 1801, Dr. Barrett | Alex. Dr. Barrett. |
| Γ | " Vaticanus, part of I. and N. | Vat. Rome | Part of Matthew | 7th | Tisch | G. Marini. |
| Δ | " Sangallensis | St. Galle, Switzerland | Gospels | 9th | 1836, Rettig | |

### THE CURSIVE MANUSCRIPTS.

These date from the tenth to the fifteenth century. So far as we now know, 2,800 are accessible to scholars. While the reading of the Uncials may be considered to be satisfactorily determined, of the Cursives few have been thoroughly collated. It is quite possible for a comparatively modern manuscript to possess a high value, as, for example, if a scribe of the fifteenth century had copied in running hand direct from the Vatican manuscript; for this and other reasons some Cursives give very important evidence.

### PATRISTIC QUOTATIONS.

We have already seen that the Scriptures, as we now possess them, are substantially identical with printed copies of the Bible down to the *fifteenth century,* and with a very large number of manuscripts dating as far back as the *fourth century.* Each step takes us nearer the time of the writers themselves, and thus our task is made more easy.

The question now arises, If the oldest manuscripts we have, only date as far back as the fourth century, what link is there connecting these with the original writings of the apostles themselves?

To this we answer, The quotations of the church fathers bridge over the chasm of those years.

By "quotations of the fathers" we mean the quotations of Scripture, and references to it, which are found in the writings of the early church fathers, and in the rabbinical paraphrases. And a very important difference is noted between the quotations of classical writers from each other and those of the fathers from the Scriptures. The references of the classical writers to each other vouch

only for the antiquity of the classic, and not for the purity of the text of the writing referred to. These references are so loose as to be of no value in determining the verbal text of the ancient classic. With the quotations of the fathers, however, it is vastly different. Great exactness is exercised in the quotations, and many are given verbatim.

It has been said that were the New Testament blotted out of existence it could be written again by referring to the quotations and references to it made by these fathers. Following is an incident related in *Our Bible,* by Charles Leach:

Many years ago, says Thomas Cooper, a party of scholarly men met at a dinner-party. During the conversation, some one put a question which no one present was able to answer. The question was this:

Suppose that the New Testament had been destroyed, and every copy of it lost by the end of the third century, could it have been collected together again from the writings of the fathers of the second and third centuries?

The question startled the company; but all were silent. Two months afterwards one of the company called upon Sir David Dalrymple, who had been present at the dinner. Pointing to a table covered with books, Sir David said:

"Look at those books. You remember the question about the New Testament and the fathers? That question roused my curiosity, and as I possessed all of the existing works of the fathers of the second and third centuries, I commenced to search, and up to this time I have found the entire New Testament, *except eleven verses.*"

In the first four centuries more than fifty authors testify to the facts told or implied in the Scriptures. The whole, or fragments, of their works remain. They belong to all parts of the world, from the Euphrates to the

Pyrenees, from northern Germany to the African Sahara. They speak the Syrian, Greek and Latin tongues. They agree in quoting Scripture as being genuine and true. They refer to it as being a distinct volume, universally received. They comment upon it and expound it. They refer to it as divine.

Theodoret, (fifth century), of Cyrus in Syria, in his writings, quotes all the epistles of Paul, and most of the Old Testament.

Chrysostom, (fourth century), covers the whole of the New Testament in his commentaries and writings.

Origen, (third century), who flourished A. D. 185-213, cites fragments from the whole of the Bible.

Irenæus, (A. D. 176-202), and Clement of Alexandria, (died A. D. 217), cited from the whole of the Scriptures in their writings.

Such evidence as this goes to prove that in the *first and second centuries* of the Christian era, and in the case of the Old Testament *two centuries earlier,* there existed and were known throughout the Roman world books called the Sacred Scriptures, and these books were essentially the same as we have them to-day.

### QUOTATIONS FROM THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS.

By "Apostolic Fathers" is meant those men who were alive before the last of the apostles passed away. Of these we may mention:

*1. Clement of Rome.*

He was doubtless a companion of Paul (Phil. 4:3). Some have thought him to be the author of the epistle to the Hebrews. He was probably a convert of Paul's, and occupied a most influential position in the early church,

being doubtless one of the bishops of Rome. He was unquestionably well acquainted with many of the apostles, and was in a positon to know what they wrote. If the New Testament was in existence in his day, surely he would be cognizant of it. He was a writer; and some of his writings are preserved to us. He wrote an epistle to the Corinthians. This epistle is filled with references to the New Testament, alluding to the words of Peter, James, Luke, John, the epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Thessalonians, Ephesians, Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, also Acts, James and Peter.

Truly, then, it may be justly inferred that our New Testament was in existence in the first century. If it had not been written until later, Clement could not have quoted the very words of the Scripture.

*2. Polycarp, bishop of the church at Smyrna.*

Polycarp was without question a disciple of the apostle John. He was born A. D. 70, and died a martyr's death A. D. 150. Of all his writings, but one epistle is remaining—the epistle to the Church at Philippi. Following are quotations setting forth the nature and value of this epistle:

"Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, serve the Lord with fear, and in truth; laying aside all empty and vain speech, and the error of many, believing in Him that raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and hath given Him glory * * * But He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also raise up us in like manner, if we do His will, and walk according to His commandments, and love those things which He loved; abstaining from all unrighteousness, inordinate affection, and love of money; from evil speaking, false witness; not render-

ing evil for evil, or railing for railing, or striking for striking, or cursing for cursing; but remembering what the Lord has taught us, saying, 'Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.'

"Let us therefore serve Him in fear, and with all reverence, as both Himself has commanded, and as the apostles who have preached the Gospel unto us, and the prophets who have foretold the Coming of our Lord have taught us; being zealous of what is good; abstaining from all offence and from false brethren, and from those who bear the name of Christ in hypocrisy, who deceive vain men. For whosoever does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, he is Antichrist: and whoever does not confess His sufferings upon the cross is from the devil; and whosoever perverts the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts, and says that there shall neither be any resurrection nor judgment, he is the firstborn of Satan. Wherefore, leaving the vaunts of many, and their false doctrines, let us return to the word that was delivered to us from the beginning: 'Watching unto prayer,' and persevering in fasting: with supplication beseeching the all-seeing God 'not to lead us into temptation,' as the Lord hath said, 'The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak.'"

*e. The testimony of Ancient Versions of the Scriptures.*

So rapid was the spread of the Gospel after the day of Pentecost that within a quarter of century Christian churches, regularly organized, were found in Samaria, Syria, Europe, Asia Minor, and Rome. The people of these lands were not able to understand the language in which the Scriptures were then written—namely, the Greek. It was necessary, therefore, that translations be made for them.

Among these translations, or versions, we may mention the *Peshito,* as used by the members of the Syrian churches, and the "Old Latin," as used by the churches in Africa. So far as we are able to trace, these were the first versions of the Scripture ever made, and are of exceeding great value because of that fact. It is not claiming too much for them to say that they were partly written in the days of the apostles.

The *Peshito,* (which means the *true* or *literal* version), *or Syriac Bible,* contains the whole of the Old Testament and most of the New in the Aramaic language, which was doubtless the language spoken in Palestine at the time of our Lord. This version contains the four Gospels, the Acts, the fourteen epistles of Paul, 1 John, 1 Peter, and James. With the exception of 2 and 3 John, 2 Peter, Jude and Revelation, it agrees with our New Testament.

Just as the *Peshito* was made for the Greek churches, so the "Old Latin" was made for the Roman churches. In fact it was from this that Jerome made his great Latin version, the Vulgate, which has ever since been the great authority of the Roman Catholic church. We may place its date about A. D. 170. It contains all the books of the New Testament as we now have them, except three —Hebrews, James, and 2 Peter.

It will be seen by the comparison of these two ancient versions that in the *first century* all the books of the New Testament, with the exception of 2 Peter, were in existence.

When quotations from the New Testament exist in such large and copious numbers that even the text of its twenty-seven books may be recovered and reconstructed from them, no man can any longer affect to doubt that the Greek Scriptures were all in existence in the first century,

and were received by the Christian churches throughout the then known world as genuine and authentic.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT.

From what has been said so far it might seem as if the preponderance of evidence has been on the side of the New Testament, and hence the question may arise in the mind of the reader, What about the integrity of the Old Testament?

1. *It seems very clear from the record we have of our Lord's life that He had in His possession or at His command, the Old Testament as we have it to-day.*

Again and again in the Gospels He refers to it by the same divisions by which it is known to us (Luke 24:27, 44). He constantly refers to "the Scriptures" (John 5:39; Luke 24:27, 32). That He meant the Old Testament there can be no doubt, for not one page of the New Testament had yet been written.

It is wonderful also to note the many references, quotations, and allusions our Saviour made to the Old Testament.

2. *And what is true of Christ is true of the apostles.*

When Paul says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and tells Timothy of the "Scriptures which are able to make him wise unto salvation"; when Peter speaks of "the Scriptures which came not in old time by the will of man," and of men who "wrest the Scriptures"; when John speaks of "the Scripture being fulfilled"—they all refer to the Old Testament.

Surely it is a great comfort to us to know that we are handling the same Scriptures that our Lord and His apostles handled.

*3. There was a Bible before even our Lord's time.*

There was, in addition to the Hebrew Scriptures, a translation of them into the Greek language. This was called the "Septuagint Version," made in the year 285 B. C. (See page 8.)

Here then is satisfactory proof that the Old Testament Scriptures, as we have them to-day, existed three hundred years before our Lord's day.

In this chapter we have endeavored to set forth the evidence which forms the basis of our belief in the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred Scriptures. Step by step we have traced the evidence back from our present English version to the famous Septuagint version which existed centuries before Christ. Farther than that we do not deem it necessary, for our present purpose, to go. From the evidence we have here submitted it can truly be said that the Bible, as we have it to-day, is in deed and in truth the very Word of God; written by the men whose names it bears, and with the text essentially unchanged; as genuine and authentic as when it left the hands of the sacred writers.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Define the following terms: genuine, authentic, forged, spurious, corrupt.
2. On what basis do the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures rest?
3. Why are they questioned? Give illustrations.

4. Do we possess any of the original manuscripts of Scripture?

5. Give a brief account of the method of proof of the genuineness and authenticity of the Bible from

a. Printed copies,

b. Manuscripts,

c. Ancient versions.

6. Name and describe the two kinds of manuscripts of the Scriptures.

7. Give a brief account of the leading manuscripts of the first class.

8. What have you to say regarding the "quotations of the fathers"?

9. Name the apostolic fathers, and state when they flourished.

10. Name and describe two ancient versions.

11. What proof have we that we have the Old Testament today as possessed by our Lord Himself and His apostles?

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CANON OF THE BIBLE.

In classical Greek the word "canon" signifies properly, "a straight rod," or "a carpenter's rule." In the early ages of the Christian religion it was used with considerable indefiniteness of meaning, though generally denoting a standard of opinion and practice. Later it came to be used as a testing rule in art, logic, grammar, and ethics. Still later the sacred writings received the name of the "Canon of the Scriptures." When, therefore, we use the term we may mean one of two things, or, indeed, both:

1. The Canon of Truth—referring to the restriction of the number of books that compose the sacred volume. As such it was first used in the year A. D. 367.

2. The Rule of Faith and Life—referring to the application of the sacred Scriptures as a rule of our lives. In this sense it is used in Galatians 6:16; Philippians 3:16.

The sense in which we use the word in this chapter is that those books are *canonical* which Christians have regarded as authentic, genuine, and of divine authority and inspiration. These books are to be found in the Bible; in the Authorized Version of 1611, the Revised Version of 1881 and 1885, and in the American Revised Version of 1901.

By *uncanonical* books we mean those that are not included in the canon, such as the Apocrypha, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Epistle of Barnabas.

**1. Why was a Canon of the Bible necessary?**

So long as the living voice of prophets and apostles was to be heard, there was no pressing need of a canon of Scripture. Under the inspiration of God they knew what was inspired, and what was not. But as soon as these men were dead—and with them inspiration ceased—it became necessary that their writings be gathered together to know what were their messages to the churches, and to preserve those writings from corruption.

Another reason why a canon was necessary was to preclude the possibility of additions to the number of inspired works. Already numerous writings were extant purporting to be inspired. Hence the question arose, Which of these are really inspired? What is the extent of inspired literature?

Still another and potent reason for the formation of the canon lay in the fact that the Emperor Diocletian issued in A. D. 302 an edict that all the sacred books should be destroyed by fire. Hence the question arose as to which books rightly deserved the name of inspired and sacred.

**2. How was the Canon of the Bible formed?**

*a. The formation of the Old Testament Canon.*

The formation of the Old Testament canon was gradual, and was composed of the writings which spread over many centuries.

Moses commanded that the books of the law be placed in the ark. This—with the addition of the book of Joshua—was done, and the sacred books were kept there during the wilderness journey, and also were in the ark during its permanent residence in Jerusalem. (Deuteronomy 31:9, 26, cf. 2 Kings 22:8; Joshua 24:26; 1 Samuel 10:25.)

Then were gathered and placed in the temple the historical and prophetical books from Joshua to David's time. On the construction of the temple Solomon deposited in it the earlier books (2 Kings 22:8, Isaiah 34:16), and enriched the collection with inspired writings from his own pen, and also some prophetic writings. So we find Daniel (9:2, R. V.) referring to "the books," Isaiah to "the book of the Lord" (29:18, 34:16).

After Solomon's day a succession of prophets arose, Jonah, Amos, Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Obadiah, and Habakkuk. These all flourished before the destruction of the temple, and enlarged the collection of existing sacred books by valuable additions.

After the Babylonian capture, when the temple was rebuilt and worship re-established, then doubtless were added the writings of Haggai and Zechariah.

About fifty years after the temple was rebuilt Ezra made a collection of the sacred writings (Neh. 8:2,3,14). To this collection were added the writings of Nehemiah, Malachi, and Ezra. It is a fact of history that Nehemiah gathered the "Acts of the Kings and the Prophets, and those of David," when founding a library for the second temple, 432 B. C. (See 2 Maccabees 2:13).

The canon of the Old Testament in the form we now have it, was the work of Ezra and the Great Synagogue. This fact is borne witness to in the most ancient Jewish writings. The Great Synagogue was composed of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. There is no doubt but that such a collection of books existed in the time of our Lord and the apostles (Luke 24:27,44).

1. These Old Testament writings are regarded as one complete whole, and were known as being emphatically the Scriptures (John 5:39, "Search the Scriptures";

10:35, "the Scriptures cannot be broken"; Matt. 21:42; 22:29; Luke 24:27, 32).

2. Matt. 23:35 and Luke 11:51 ("from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias," *i. e.* from Genesis to 2 Chron.) are a witness to the arrangement and compass of our present Hebrew Bible.

3. Luke 24:44 is evidence of the division into three parts, "the Law," "the Prophets," and "the Psalms."

4. 2 Tim. 3:15,16 implies that the Scriptures were collected together.

5. The direct citations of the Old Testament in the New amount to about 280 (including all references about 850), and nearly all the books are quoted (save Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon).

6. The Old Testament canon was formed gradually, receiving its final additions during the period beginning with Ezra and ending about 330 B. C. See Neh. 12:11,22. The genealogy of high-priests here given extends from 536-336 B. C., and it is almost certain that the Jaddua here mentioned is the high-priest who (according to Josephus) had an interview with Alexander the Great, shortly after the battle of Issus, 333 B. C.

*b. The New Testament Canon.*

The New Testament canon was gradually added to that of the Old Testament. But it was some considerable time after our Lord's ascension before any of the books contained in it were actually written.

The first and most important work of the apostles was to deliver a *personal testimony* to the chief facts of the Gospel history (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:21,22). Their teaching was at first oral, and it was no part of their intention to create a permanent literature. A cycle of selected rep-

resentative facts sufficed to form the groundwork of their oral Gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-10).

But in the course of time many endeavored to commit to writing this oral Gospel (Luke 1:1-4). So long as the apostles were still living, the necessity for *written* records of the words and actions of our Lord was not so pressing. But when the time came for their removal from this world, it became extremely important that authoritative records should be put forth. Thus the *Gospels* came into existence, two by apostles themselves, and two by friends and close companions of the apostles.

But already had arisen another kind of composition. Founders of churches, often unable to visit them personally, desired to communicate with their converts for purposes of counsel, reproof, and instruction. Thus arose the *Epistles,* which were put forth from time to time to meet special needs and emergencies.

The persecution of Diocletian (302 A. D.) brought to the front the question of the sacred literature of the church. The persecutors demanded that the Scriptures should be given up. This the Christians refused to do. Hence the question became urgent—What books are apostolic? The answer lies in our New Testament. There were at that time many false and spurious gospels and epistles. Careful, prayerful, and deliberate examination, however, proved which were genuine and which were false. The genuine were received by the church as the inspired writings of the apostles and others whose names the books bear. Thus arose the New Testament canon.

### 3. The books called "Homologoumena" and "Antilegomena."

In the study of canonics a word or two must be said regarding these terms, and what is meant by them.

At the time of the formation of the New Testament canon twenty out of the twenty-seven books were readily and universally accepted as genuine, and therefore called "Homologoumena" (*i. e.* acknowledged). These twenty books were the four Gospels, the Acts, the epistles of Paul (except that to the Hebrews), and the first epistles of John and Peter. The other seven books—Hebrews, 2 and 3 John, 2 Peter, Jude, James, Revelation—were disputed for a time by particular churches, and were therefore styled "Antilegomena" (or disputed).

The question at issue with regard to the books called "Antilegomena," was not so much that of the canonicity of the writings, as whether they were really written by the men who were called their authors. Hebrews bore no name of its author, and differed in style from the acknowledged Pauline epistles; 2 Peter differed in style from 1 Peter; James and Jude styled themselves "servants," and not "apostles"; the writer of 2 and 3 John called himself an "elder" or "presbyter," and not an "apostle"; Jude recorded apocryphal stories. For these reasons these books were not at once allowed their place in the canon. After a deliberate examination, however, they were at last received as genuine, the very delay proving the close scrutiny which their claims had undergone. At the beginning of the fourth century they were received by most of the churches, and at the end of that century they were received by all.

**4. The Apocryphal Books.**

These books derive their name from a Greek word, *apokruphos,* which means *"hidden."* They are so called because they are,—(1) hidden; (2) of unknown authority; (3) spurious. They were not recognized as inspired books by the Jews, who regarded them, however, as hav-

ing high authority, and held them in high esteem as being a valuable history of their nation. Although they were carefully distinguished from the canonical Scriptures, their use was not only allowed, but many of them are quoted in Talmudical writings. They were given a place by themselves in the sacred volume, but with the distinct statement that they were not to be regarded as of equal authority with the books of the canon, their position being between the Old and New Testaments. We find them in some Bibles to-day—especially in Roman Catholic Bibles, since they are regarded by the Roman church as inspired books.

The Apocrypha contains fourteen books, namely, 1 and 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, the rest of Esther, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the Song of the Three Children, the Story of Susannah, Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Manasses, and 1 and 2 Maccabees. It is true that by some of the fathers of the Christian church a few of these books have been quoted as canonical, but they were not looked on in this light; nor were their titles included in any list of canonical writings during the first four centuries after the birth of our Lord. It was not, indeed, until the Council of Trent, in 1545, that they were definitely declared to be an integral portion of Holy Scripture as acknowledged by the Romish church. "Philo," says Angus, "never quotes them as he does the sacred Scriptures; and Josephus expressly excludes them. The Jewish church never received them as part of the canon, and they are never quoted either by our Lord or by His apostles; a fact the more striking as St. Paul twice quotes heathen poets. It is remarkable, too, that the last inspired prophet closes his predictions by recommending to his countrymen the books of Moses, and intimates that no other messenger is to be expected by them till the coming

of the second Elijah (Mal. 4:4-6) * * * Internal evidence, moreover, is against their inspiration. Divine authority is claimed by none of the writers, and by some it is virtually disowned (2 Mac. 2:23; 15:38). The books contain statements at variance with history (Baruch 1:2, compared with Jer. 43:6,7), self-contradictory, and opposed to the doctrines and precepts of Scripture."

For what, then, can the Apocryphal books be esteemed useful? In the Church of England some parts of them are read "for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine." By no Protestant church are these writings held to be the rule of faith, and contrasted with the canonical books, they are utterly without authority. From a historical point of view they are of value in showing the condition of the Jewish people, and relating certain events that intervene between the closing of the Old Testament and the opening of the Christian era.

These facts sufficiently indicate the course of the argument by which the canonicity of the sacred Scriptures is proved. Let it be proven that these books were written by the men whose names they bear, and that these men wrote under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, and the canonicity of the Bible is a settled fact. We have, therefore, a right to believe that we have in our Bible a rule of faith and life—yea, the supreme and ultimate rule—by which we may govern our lives in order that they may be in accordance with the revealed will of God.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. What is meant by the term "The canon of the Bible"?

2. Give a reason why the books of the Bible are canonical.

3. What is meant by the term "Uncanonical"?

4. Why was a canon of the Bible necessary?

5. Give a brief description of the formation of the Old Testament canon.

6. Give a brief description of the formation of the New Testament canon.

7. Explain the terms "Homologoumena" and "Antilegomena."

8. Give a brief account of the books called "Antilegomena."

9. What is meant by the term "Apocrypha"?

10. How are the Apocryphal books regarded by the Roman church? and how by the Protestant church?

What is the value of the Apocrypha?

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE LANGUAGES OF THE BIBLE.

The following extract is taken by permission from a lecture delivered in 1877 by C. A. Briggs, D. D., and published by the American Tract Society:

"The languages of the Bible were prepared by Divine Providence as the most suitable ones for declaring the divine revelation to mankind. Belonging, as they do, to the two great families of speech, the Shemitic and the Indo-Germanic, which have been the bearers of civilization, culture, and the noblest products of human thought and emotion, they are themselves the highest and most perfect developments of those families, presenting, it is true, their contrasted features, but yet combining in a higher unity on the principles of Pentecost, in order to give us the complete divine revelation. Having accomplished this, their highest purpose, they soon afterwards became *stereotyped* in form, or (as they are commonly called), dead languages, so that henceforth all successive generations, and indeed all the families of the earth, might resort to them and find the common, divine revelation in the *same fixed and unalterable forms.*

"Language is the product of the human mind, as thought and emotion are the products of man's soul; and therefore it depends upon the constitution of that soul, the historical experiences of the family or race speaking it, especially the internal experiences in culture, civilization, morals, and religion. The connection between

language and thought is not a loose one, but an *essential* connection. Language is not merely a dress that thought may put on or off at its pleasure. It is the body of which thought is the soul. It is the flesh and rounded form of which thought is the life and energy. Hence it is that language is moulded by thought and emotion, by experience and culture; it is, as it were, the speaking *face* of the race employing it, and it becomes the historical *monument* of the experience of that race; so that in many nations that have perished, and whose early history is lost in primeval darkness, their language gives us the key to their history and experience as truly as the Parthenon tells us of the Greek mind, and the Pyramids of the Egyptian.

"It is not a matter of indifference, therefore, as to the languages that were to bear the divine revelation; for although the divine revelation was designed for all races, and may be conveyed in all the languages of earth, yet, inasmuch as it was delivered in advancing historical development, certain particular languages must be employed as most suitable for the purpose, and indeed those which could best become the fountains for enriching the various languages of the earth. Hence it is that we can confidently claim that there are no languages—not even the English and the German, which have drunk deepest from the classic springs of the Hebrew and the Greek —there are no languages that could so adequately convey the divine revelation in its simplicity, grandeur, fulness and variety, power and impressiveness, as those selected by Divine Providence for the purpose.

### THE VALUE OF THE ORIGINAL.

"Hence it is that no translation can ever take the place of the *original Scriptures;* for a translation is, at the best,

the work of uninspired men, who, though holy and faithful, and guided by the Spirit of God, are yet unable to do more than give us their own interpretation of the sacred oracles. They must enter into the very spirit and atmosphere of the original text; they must think and feel with the original authors; their hearts must throb with the same emotion; their minds must move in the same lines of thinking; they must adapt themselves to the numerous types of character coming from various and widely different periods of divine revelation, in order to correctly apprehend the thought and make it their own, and then *reproduce* it in a foreign tongue. A mere external, grammatical, and lexicographical translation is worthless. Unless the spirit of the original has been not only apprehended, but conveyed, it is no translation at all. Hence it is requisite that all-sided men should be chosen for this work, or at least a body of men so selected as to embrace the various types and phases of human experience and character. But even then the translation can only express the theological, ethical, and practical conceptions of the holiest and most learned men of the particular age; and inasmuch as the divine revelation is an inspired revelation, given through holy men who spake not only from their own time and for their own time, but from and for the timeless Spirit, the *eternal* ideas for all time, so the advancing generations will ever need to understand the word of God better than their fathers, and must, if they are faithful, continually improve in their knowledge of the original Scriptures, in their power of apprehending them, of digesting them, and of reproducing them in speech and life. How important, therefore, how essential it is, if the church is to maintain a living connection with the sacred Scriptures, and enter ever deeper into their spirit and mysterious hidden life, that it should encourage a

considerable portion of its youth to pursue these studies, and at all events insist that its *ministry,* who are to train it in the things of God, should have not merely a superficial knowledge of the Bible, such as any layman may readily attain, but a deep and thorough acquaintance with the original perennial fountains of truth; otherwise, as church history has already sufficiently shown, these uninspired versions will assume the place of the *original inspired word,* and the interpretations of a particular generation will become the stereotyped dogmas of many generations, and the life of a Christian people will be cut off from its only source of spiritual growth, and a barren scholasticism, with its stereotyped dogmas and mechanical institutions, will assume the place and importance of the *divine Word* and *living communion with God.*"

### THE LANGUAGES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

With the exception of a very few passages the whole of the Old Testament was written in the Hebrew tongue. This was especially the language of the children of Israel. It is termed "the Jews' language" in 2 Kings 18:26. It is to the Jews of the Old Testament time that Josephus applies the epithet Hebrew. But this language, as all others, changed as time went on, and long before our Saviour's birth the old Hebrew had gradually changed into Syrio-Aramæan, or Syriac, which was the form of Hebrew spoken by the people of the Holy Land in the days of our Lord.

Because of this change in language—together with the fact that all living languages are constantly changing, new words taking the place of old and obsolete ones—some Hebrew scholars are able to discover three periods into which the history of the language may be divided;

each period being marked by distinct peculiarities of style and idiom.

To the *first* period belong the books of the Pentateuch, which are written in Hebrew as spoken in the time of Moses.

To the *second* period, during which the language had reached its highest point as regards purity and refinement, belong the books of Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, the Psalms of David, the Proverbs and other writings of Solomon, and the books of the prophets Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, and Habakkuk.

The writings of the rest of the prophets belong to the *third* period, as do also the books of Esther, Ezra and Nehemiah. During this period words, phrases, and idioms of foreign languages (so to speak) had become incorporated with the pure Hebrew of the second period, in consequence of the extended intercourse of the Jews with the neighboring nations, and the enforced residence of the people in Babylon and other parts of the Assyrian Empire during the Captivity. Parts of the books of Ezra and Daniel are written in Chaldee, or eastern Aramæan, a cognate language to the Hebrew. Towards the end of the third period the Hebrew began to be a written, rather than a spoken, language, bearing much the same relation to the Syriac of the time of our Saviour that Anglo-Saxon does to English; and in consequence of this some of the writers of the later books of the Old Testament recovered and exhibited much of the purity that distinguished the writings of the second period.

"It is not possible to give examples of changes in the language, and the introduction of words from other languages, in a manner that would be intelligible to the ordinary reader; but the following will show in some degree

what is meant. In the Pentateuch, when the death of anyone is recorded, he is said to be 'gathered unto his people' (Genesis 25:8-17; 49:29; Numbers 27:13; Deut. 32:50). In Judges, the generation in which Joshua lived is spoken of as 'being gathered unto their fathers' (Judges 2:10); but in books written in later times of the second period it is said that the dead man 'slept with his fathers' (1 Kings 2:10; and generally when the death of any king is spoken of in the books of Kings and Chronicles). From this example some idea may be gathered of the transition of an expression from an earlier to a later form, through an intermediate stage.

"If it be asked what practical use there is in what has just been said about the periods of, and changes in, the Hebrew language, the answer is that the being able to trace the progress and decadence of the language in the books of Holy Scripture is a proof that they were written at different periods, and in some cases at long intervals, and that it is utterly impossible, even for this reason, that the Bible can be a book fabricated by man for some purpose of his own, though for what purpose, as far as man's intention can go, it is impossible to divine."

The passages in the Old Testament which are not written in Hebrew are as follows: Ezra 4:8 to 6:18; 7:12-26; Jeremiah 10:11; Daniel 2:4 to 7:28. "These particular portions are written in the Chaldee dialect, which is transitional, and presents various points of difference from the latter Chaldee, in which the Targums were written, and also from the Syriac. This curious phenomenon finds its explanation in the residence of Daniel and Ezra at Babylon, and their relation to Babylonian and Persian rulers, who successively held sway over that city and the surrounding countries."

### THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

"The language in which the books of the New Testament were written was Hellenistic, or Hebrew-Greek. It is so called because it is not the classic Greek, in its different dialects, as written by Greek authors before the time of Alexander the Great, but the common Greek, into which the various classic dialects were merged after the different Greek tribes—for they were little better—had been welded into one nation under the sway of Philip of Macedon, when the Macedonians had gained the upper hand in the affairs of the Greek peninsula. This Greek is now known as Hellenic Greek, the Greeks being known as Hellenists, or people of Hellas, from Hellen, the fabled father and originator of the race. After the conquest of the greater part of the known world by Alexander the Great, the son of Philip of Macedon, the Greek language, as thus modified, was carried into all parts of Egypt and the East, and it became the spoken language of the Jews who resided in the Greek colonies of Alexandria and elsewhere. The Jews who thus acquired and spoke the Greek language introduced forms and idioms of their own language, and words borrowed from the languages of neighboring nations, to the eastward; and the Greek, thus modified, became the Hellenistic, or Hebraised Greek, which was in use in Palestine in the time of our Saviour, and in which the books of the New Testament were written. This Greek abounds in words derived from eastern sources, and which were not known to the writers in classic Greek."

### A KNOWLEDGE OF THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGES

is a great help in the right understanding of the Scrip-

tures, yet it is not absolutely necessary to a correct realization of its rich and deep truths. "An accurate and intimate knowledge of Hebrew and Greek is calculated to throw much light upon the niceties and meanings of words and phrases employed in Holy Scripture; yet how very few Bible students there are who can become possessed of this knowledge. What a blessing and mercy it is that though such knowledge is desirable, it is not essential; and that the labors of others have given us, and men of every nation under heaven, the power to read the Scriptures in our own tongues, and to learn from them 'the wonderful works of God' (Acts 2).

"While we need a knowledge of Greek generally in order to read the New Testament, we need, in order to understand it, a knowledge of New Testament Greek, and of the Old Testament version. Yet withal such a knowledge is not absolutely essential to the understanding of the Scriptures. The English reader, trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, with only his English Bilble, may understand the New Testament better than the scholar who brings to the investigation of a particular passage only classical acquisitions."

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. What have you to say with regard to divine superintendence as touching the languages of the Bible?

2. In what languages were the original Scriptures written?

3. Trace the three stages in the development of Old Testament Hebrew, and name the books under each.

4. Cite the passages in the Old Testament which are not written in Hebrew, and give reasons therefor

5. What was the character of the Greek of the New Testament?

6. Of what advantage is a knowledge of the original languages of the Scripture in regard to the interpretation?

7. Is such knowledge absolutely necessary?

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE.

By a *Version* is meant a translation into some other language than the original. The most important versions of the Scriptures are enumerated in the next section. All the versions of the New Testament are not of critical value. The oldest of them have been handed down to us in manuscript as the Greek original has been, and in some languages we have a large number of versions, while in others the total number is very scanty. "If an ancient version accords with the early Greek manuscripts in some particular reading, we have at least an important proof of the early prevalence of that reading. If a second version supports the reading in question, the weight of evidence in its favor becomes enormously greater."

### 1. Ancient Versions of the Bible.*

#### I. THE OLD TESTAMENT.

1. *Greek Versions.* Of these *the Septuagint* occupies the highest rank. According to tradition, it was translated from the Hebrew by seventy-two Jews, each of whom, in a separate cell, made a complete translation of the entire Old Testament, and, when compared, these seventy-two copies were found to be so completely identical that they

*From the Oxford *Helps to the Study of the Bible*, by permission.

were deemed to be inspired. Jerome disbelieved this story; and the inequality of the rendering of different portions seems to afford convincing proof that they were the work of different persons and even of different times. Probably it was made gradually at Alexandria, at various dates, from about the middle of the third century, and the earliest portion may have appeared in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus (B. C. 285). It seems to have been the only Scripture with which most of the Alexandrian Jews and the early Christian writers were familiar. It is not accurately translated from the Hebrew, as we now have it, the text showing many important variations, both in words and phrases, as well as some additions to the original; and it contains many Coptic words. In this version, the Pentateuch possesses the highest literary merit, the Book of Proverbs ranks next, and Ecclesiastes occupies a very low place; the Prophets, Psalms, and other books are poor productions, while the Book of Daniel was so incorrect as to be disused by the early Christian church.

2. *The Version of Aquila.* Aquila was a native of Sinope in Pontus, and became a proselyte from heathenism to Judaism. At the instigation of the Alexandrian Jews he sought in the second century A. D. to supply a literal rendering of the Hebrew text for the benefit of those who were more familiar with the Greek than the original, in opposition to the Septuagint, which had been appropriated by the Christians. It was so literal as to be sometimes unintelligible. It was highly esteemed by the Jews, and is quoted in the Talmud, but is discredited by early Christian writers.

3. *The Version of Theodotion.* About the same time Theodotion, a native of Ephesus, and an Ebionite, revised the LXX (Septuagint) merely correcting its inaccuracies.

In the result many of his emendations were introduced into the LXX, and his translation of Daniel superseded the one in that version.

4. *The Version of Symmachus.* Symmachus, an Ebionite of Samaria (*c.* A. D. 200), gave his name to a new translation, which is paraphrastic, like the LXX, but displays more purity and elegance of style and language. It formed the third of the six versions given in the *Hexapla* of Origen. Three later versions, quoted in the *Hexapla,* were anonymous, and only fragments of them are preserved.

II. ANCIENT VERSION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

1. *Syriac.* The most important of all the Syriac versions of the Scriptures is the *Peshîtâ* "the simple" or "plain" version. This was in use as early as the ninth or tenth century. Neither the time nor the place of its translation is known, but it seems to be the work of several hands, and the evidence points to the conclusion that it was produced in the second century. The translators were well acquainted with Hebrew, and books like Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Job are rendered with great exactness. Ephraem the Syrian gives, in the latter half of the fourth century, abundant proof of its use in general by his countrymen. This version has always been accepted by all sections of the Syrian Church as authentic, and from it several Arabic translations have been made. It contains all the Canonical Books of the Old Testament, as well as those of the New, except the second and third epistles of John, 2 Peter, the epistle of Jude, and the Revelation.

2. *The Old Latin Version.* Fragments of an old Latin Version of the Bible are found in ancient Christian

writers, but the history of its origin is lost in complete obscurity. All that can be affirmed is that it was made in North Africa, where the church seems to have been Latin-speaking from the first, and was current in the last quarter of the second century. In the Old Testament the version was made from the unrevised edition of the LXX; and in the New it omitted the epistle to the Hebrews, James, and 2 Peter. Tertullian gives the earliest testimony to the existence and character of the Old Latin Version (*Vetus Latina*).

3. *The Vulgate.* The old Latin Version was superseded in Italy by the *Itala,* and this in turn by the *Vulgate* (i. e. the *current* text), made by one of the greatest Biblical scholars of his day, Eusebius Hieronymus, better known as St. Jerome. Jerome revised the current Latin version of the New Testament (A. D. 383-404). He also translated the Old Testament into Latin from the Hebrew. For this work he took up his residence at Bethlehem, and was occupied upon it for twenty-one years. Although at first the reverence for the LXX militated against its reception, from the time of Gregory the Great it became the authorized version of the Western Church. This translation, however, was gradually corrupted by intermixture with other Latin versions. The discordance of the copies in use was noticed by the Council of Trent in one of its decrees, and Sixtus V. gave to the world a revised text in 1590 A. D. Three years later the present standard edition was issued by Clement VIII. The new edition is an improvement on its predecessor, but it is by no means faultless. The labors of Jerome were very important. His work is a witness of the Hebrew text at a very early period, for he had probably manuscripts before him of great antiquity, and even in its present state it is a valuable aid in the criticism of the Hebrew text.

4. *Other Versions.* Besides the Syriac and the Latin, there are many other versions, made at different times, and in different countries; as e. g. the famous Gothic Version of Ulfilas, the Armenian, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Coptic, or Egyptian, all of which have their value in elucidating the sacred text. These are for the most part independent testimonies, and not mere copies of some one common original, as their verbal differences sufficiently attest; but their complete agreement in all essential points demonstrates the care with which the sacred books have been preserved, while it establishes their integrity more satisfactorily than that of any other ancient book is established.

## 2. English Versions of the Bible.

Translations of the Psalter and of some other parts of the Bible were made in the thirteenth century or earlier.

1380. *Wyclif* with some of his followers translated the whole Bible into English from the Latin Vulgate. This great and historic work was accomplished before the days of printing, and was never issued from the press until it was edited by Forshall and Madden for the Clarendon Press in 1850.

1525. *Tindale's New Testament.* The printing was begun at Cologne. On the flight of Tindale to Worms, a new (8vo) English New Testament was printed there; and afterwards the Cologne edition (4to with glosses) was completed. Many copies of it were publicly burned by order of Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, who was especially offended at Tindale's attempt to translate such ecclesiastical words as "church."

1530. *Tindale's Pentateuch* was printed by Hans Luft of Marburg.

1534. *Tindale's New Testament*, carefully revised throughout by its translator, was printed at Antwerp by Martin Lempereur. This is the true primary version of the English New Testament.

1535. *Miles Coverdale* translated the Bible from the Zürich (Swiss-German) Bible, and the Latin version of Pagninus (1528), probably under the patronage of Thomas Cromwell. This was the first version of the whole Bible published in English. It was probably printed at Zürich.

1537. *Matthew's Bible.* This was made up of Tindale's Pentateuch and New Testament, completed from Coverdale for the rest of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, the whole edited by John Rogers. It was probably printed at Antwerp, but was published by Grafton and Whitchurch of London with the king's license, and was the first "Authorized Version." This is the true primary version of the printed English Bible.

1539. *Taverner's,* an edition of Matthew's Bible, edited by Taverner.

1539. *The Great Bible.* A new edition of Matthew's Bible, revised, and compared with the Hebrew, by Coverdale, and published in England under the sanction of Thomas Cromwell in 1539. Archbishop Cranmer wrote a prologue to the second of the seven editions.

1560. *The Geneva Bible.* Published by the refugee reformers at Geneva, and for half-a-century the most popular of all English versions. It is best known as the "Breeches" Bible, because of a rendering in Genesis 3:7.

1568. *The Bishop's Bible.* A revision of the Great Bible made at the suggestion of Archbishop Parker by fifteen theologians, eight of whom were bishops. A second edition appeared in 1572.

1582. *The Rheims Version of the New Testament.* This translation was made from the Vulgate, and was published in 1583. A companion translation of the Old Testament was published at Douai in 1609, 1610. Both by Roman Catholics.

1611. *The Authorized Version,* translated from the Hebrew and Greek (by order of James I) by forty-seven divines from Oxford, Cambridge, and London. To London was allotted Genesis to 1 Chron. and the epistles; to Cambridge, 2 Chron. to Ecclesiastes and the Apocrypha; to Oxford, the Prophets, Gospels, Acts, and Revelation. This, from its great excellence, gradually superseded all preceding versions.

The textual value of these successive editions may be briefly stated thus: The style, tone, and to a great extent the phraseology of the English Bible were settled once for all by William Tindale. The only proof of this required is to read a Gospel in the Revised Version side by side with the 1525 Tindale, and Genesis in the Revised Version side by side with the 1530 Pentateuch. Next in order of importance comes Matthew's Bible, giving the results of Tindale's latest work. In the Great Bible of 1539 Coverdale is seen at his best, as for that edition he very carefully revised and improved his 1535 Bible. The Bishops' of 1568 exerted little influence upon subsequent revisions; but in the preparation of the Authorized Version, the Bishops' text, as printed in the 1602 edition, was taken as the basis. A very powerful influence was exerted over King James' translators by two very opposite versions: First, the Geneva Bible of 1560, and secondly, the Rheims New Testament of 1583.

1881, 1885. *The Revised Version* originated in a resolution of the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, England, in February, 1870. The work of revision was

entrusted to two companies, of tried Biblical scholarship, one for the Old, the other for the New Testament, in cooperation with two similar American companies. The Revised *New Testament* was issued in 1881, the Revised *Bible* in 1885. The changes effected by the revisers may be thus classified:—

(*a.*) *Emendations of the Text.* It was the great aim of the revisers, by a comparison of early manuscripts, ancient versions, and early quotations, to obtain a text approximating as near as possible to the original documents. But there is a great difference between the Old and New Testament in respect to the design. The Received, or, as it is commonly called, the Massoretic Text of the Old Testament has come down in manuscripts of no very great antiquity. But it was thought most prudent to adopt it as the basis of the work, and to depart from it only in exceptional cases. In respect, however, to the New Testament, there are many manuscripts and translations to be dealt with. The number of changes, therefore, made by the revisers in the text on the authority of the best manuscripts is very considerable; but while they give a more faithful rendering, they leave unchanged every doctrine found in the Old Version.

(*b.*) *Modification of Language.* It was intended that the modern reader should be enabled to understand the meaning of the original writers, while losing as little as possible the sacred associations which have gathered round the familiar language of our English Bible. Antique or archaic words were, therefore, only altered where they had become misleading or unintelligible; and whatever changes were introduced, they were made as far as possible to conform to the language of the time when the Authorized Version was made. In some cases Hebrew words of a technical or personal character are retained

instead of being translated. Thus "goat for Azazel" replaces "scapegoat" in Lev. 16; the word Ashêrah, with its plurals Asherim and Asheroth, denoting the wooden symbol of some goddess, takes the place of "grove" in Judges 3:7; 6:25, and other passages. In rendering technical terms and names of places and persons greater uniformity has been observed, and greater accuracy in the rendering of names of plants, animals, and precious stones.

(*c.*) *Changes of form.* The old divisions of chapters and verses are so retained as to be still available for reference, but the books are divided into paragraphs, and sometimes (especially in the Old Testament) the transition to a new subject is marked by a space. Poetical books, or short poetical passages, are printed in lines like the verses of modern poetry. The New Testament quotations from the prophetical books are given in lines. The English headings to the chapters are omitted throughout, as involving questions of interpretation. Only such titles are retained as already existed in the Hebrew, such as we find in many of the Psalms, the new translation of which and the marginal explanations are very instructive. The whole collection of the Psalms is divided into five books, corresponding to the arrangement of the Hebrew Psalter.

(*d.*) *Mistranslations,* again, have been corrected where necessary. This is naturally more noticeable in the New than in the Old Testament. Thus, to quote one or two instances: In Luke 23:15 the substitution of "For he sent him back unto us," for "I sent you to him," gives a meaning to a clause which is otherwise not only wrong but meaningless. Again, in Acts 26:28 the translation "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian" is far more accurate than the "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" of the A. V. In Acts 27:14 the A. V. rendering, "not long after

there arose against it a tempestuous wind," introduces a geographical confusion, which disappears before the R. V. rendering, "there beat down from it a tempestuous wind." The marginal references are here of special importance as justifying a better rendering of various clauses.

1901. *The American Revised Version.* Another very important version is the American Revised Version. The reason for its existence is best stated by the following quotation from its preface:

"In the course of the joint labors of the English and American revisers it was agreed that respecting all points of ultimate difference, the English companies, who had had the initiative in the work of revision, should have the decisive vote. But as an offset to this, it was proposed on the British side that the American preferences should be published as an *Appendix* in every copy of the Revised Bible during a term of fourteen years. The American committee on their part pledged themselves to give, for the same limited period, no sanction to the publication of any other editions of the Revised Version than those issued by the University Presses of England.

"There still remained the possibility that the British revisers, or the University Presses, might eventually adopt in the English editions many, or the most, of the American preferences, in case these should receive the approval of scholars and the general public. But soon after the close of their work in 1885 the English Revision companies disbanded; and there has been no indication of an intention on the part of the Presses to amalgamate the readings of the Appendix, either wholly or in part, with the text of the English editions.

"The American Revision committee, after the publication of the Revised Version in 1885, resolved to continue their

organization, and have regarded it as a possibility that an American recension of the English revision might eventually be called for. Accordingly they have been engaged more or less diligently, ever since 1885, and especially in the last four years, in making ready for such a publication. The judgment of scholars, both in Great Britain and in the United States, has so far approved the American preferences that it now seems to be expedient to issue an edition of the Revised Version with those preferences embodied in the text.

"If the preparation of this new edition had consisted merely in the mechanical work of transferring the readings of the Appendix to the text, it would have been a comparatively easy task. But the work was in point of fact a much more elaborate one. The Appendix itself was in need of revision; for it had been prepared under circumstances which rendered fulness and accuracy almost impossible. This work could, of course, not be taken in hand until the revision was concluded; and since it required a careful consideration of discussions and decisions extending over a period of many years, there was need of many months' time, if the Appendix was to be satisfactorily constructed, especially as it was thought desirable to reduce the number of recorded differences, and this required the drawing of a sharp line between the more and the less important. Manifestly such a task would be one of no little difficulty at the best. But when the time came for it to be done, the University Presses deemed that the impatient demand of the British public for the speedy publication of the Revision must be respected; and they insisted on a prompt transmission of the Appendix. Prepared under such pressure and in such haste, it was obviously inevitable that it should be marked by

grave imperfections; and the correction of its errors and the supplementing of its defects has been a work of much time and labor.

"When the Appendix was originally prepared, an effort was made to pave the way for an eventual acceptance of the American preferences on the part of the English Presses, by reducing the number of the points of difference to the lowest limit, and thus leaving out much the larger part of the emendations which the revisers had previously, by a two-thirds vote, pronounced to be in their opinion of decided importance. In now issuing an American edition, the American revisers, being entirely untrammelled by any connection with British revisers or British Presses, have felt themselves to be free to go beyond the task of incorporating the Appendix in the text, and are no longer restrained from introducing into the text a large number of those suppressed emendations."

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. What is meant by a "Version"?
2. Name and describe the principal Greek Versions of the Old Testament.
3. Name and describe the principal ancient Versions of the Old and New Testament.
4. Give the names and dates of the earlier English Versions.
5. What is the date of the Revised Version? What changes were here effected?
6. Why was the American Revised Version necessary?

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE GENERAL STRUCTURE AND DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE.

The Bible, as regards both language and contents, is divided into two main parts, known respectively as the Old and the New Testaments.

The former consists, in our English Bible, of thirty-nine books. In the Hebrew Bible, however, it consists only of twenty-four books—1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, and the twelve minor prophets being respectively counted as one book. According to a statement made by Josephus, this number was again reduced still further by adding the book of Ruth to Judges, and that of Lamentations to Jeremiah. This may have risen from a desire to bring the number of the books down to the number of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which contains twenty-two letters.

#### 1. The Grouping of the Books of the Old Testament.

In the Hebrew Bible the Old Testament falls into three main divisions:

1. The Book of the Law, or Torah.
2. The Prophets, or Nebiim.
3. The Holy Writings, or Kethubim.

##### *1. The Book of the Law.*

This includes Genesis to Deuteronomy—the Pentateuch—also called the Books of Moses.

*2. The Prophets.*

These are divided into the "former prophets," or historical books, and the "later prophets," or prophetical writings in the stricter sense; also into the "major prophets," and the "minor prophets."

*3. The Holy Writings.*

These include:

a. The Poetical Books—Psalms, Proverbs, Job.

b. The Five Rolls—Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther.

c. Other Books—Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 and 2 Chronicles.

In the Septuagint Version the arrangement is determined mainly by a consideration of the contents of the books. First come the Historical, then the Prophetical, and lastly the Poetical Books.

The following classification of the books of the Old Testament, according to subject matter, is interesting and instructive. It is from *The Cambridge Companion.*

*a. Historical.*

1. The Pentateuch and Joshua: the origin of the people, the foundation of the Israelite constitution, and the settlement in Palestine.

2. Judges, Samuel, Kings: The history of the people to the downfall of the monarchy.

3. Ezra, Nehemiah: personal memoirs of the captivity and the return.

4. Ruth, Esther, Chronicles: special incidents in, and aspects of, the history.

*b. Prophetical.*

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, minor prophets.

*c. Poetical.*

1. Psalms, Lamentations—lyrical.
2. Canticles—idyllic.

*d. Didactic.*

Job.

*e. Sapiential* (Deep wisdom).

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes.

*f. Apocalyptic.*

Daniel, part of Ezekiel, Zechariah.

In our English Bible the Old Testament books are arranged according to their subject matter.

1. *The Pentateuch—or the five books of Moses*—Genesis to Deuteronomy.
2. *The historical books* from Joshua to the end of Esther.
3. *The poetical or devotional books* from Job to the Song of Solomon.
4. *The prophetical books,* from Isaiah to Malachi.

The following table furnishes us with a chronological view of the Old Testament books:

1. Genesis to 2 Kings are in chronological order, covering the period from 4004-587 B. C.

2. 1 and 2 Chronicles run parallel to these books, covering the same period.

3. Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther continue the history from 536-420 B. C.

4. The approximate dates for the major prophets are as follows: Isaiah, 760-690 B. C.; Jeremiah, 628-583 B. C.; Ezekiel, 594-535 B. C.; Daniel, 605-536 B. C.

5. The minor prophets are evidently arranged chronologically: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, all between 850-750 B. C.; Micah and Nahum, 750-680 B. C.; Habakkuk and Zephaniah, 640-590 B. C.; Haggai and Zechariah, 525-510 B. C.; Malachi, 433-410 B. C.

## 2. The Division of the New Testament books.

The New Testament presents no serious difficulty with regard to the arrangement of its books. It contains twenty-seven books, and they fall naturally into the following divisions or groups:

1. *The Gospels*—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
2. *The Acts of the Apostles.*
3. *The Epistles of Paul* (including Hebrews).
4. *The General Epistles.*
5. *The Book of Revelation.*

This arrangement is commended because of its conformity with the matter of divine revelation and its order. First, we have the life of Christ, in the Gospels; then the activity of His apostles, in the Acts; then the correspondence of those engaged in the work, in the epistles; and finally, the apocalyptic spirit and its manifestation within the church, in the book of the Revelation.

A classification of the books of the New Testament according to subject matter is as follows:

1. *Historical*—Matthew to Acts.
2. *Didactic*—the Epistles.
(a.) Doctrinal—all Paul's, except 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.
(b.) Pastoral—1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.
(c.) General—James, Peter, John, Jude.
3. *Prophetic*—the Revelation.

A *doctrinal* arrangement of Paul's epistles may be given as follows:

1. Eschatological—1 and 2 Thessalonians.
2. Anti-Judaic—1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans.
3. Personal and Christological—Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Hebrews.
4. Pastoral—1 and 2 Timothy, Titus.

The epistles of Paul may be presented in *chronological* order thus:

A. D. 52. 1 and 2 Thessalonians.
A. D. 57. Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans.
A. D. 62. Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, Philippians, and Hebrews (?).
A. D. 67. 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus.

This arrangement is important for the discerning of the progressive development of truth in the experience and teaching of the apostle.

### 3. The Division of the Bible into Chapters and Verses.

The English Bible contains 1,189 chapters, 31,173 verses, and 773,692 words. Of these, 929 chapters, 23,214

verses, and 592,439 words occur in the Old Testament, and 260 chapters, 7,959 verses, and 181,253 words in the New.

"Although the division of the books of the Bible into chapters and verses is of comparatively recent date, a division into portions for liturgical purposes was in use among the Jews, and these were again subdivided into sections somewhat similar to our verses. Thus, in the Pentateuch there were 54 greater divisions and 669 lesser divisions,, and the prophetical writings were similarly divided. The Hebrew Scriptures are divided by modern Jews into chapters and verses on our system, which is manifestly much more convenient for reference; for when the ancient Jews wished to appeal to or quote any passage of the Old Testament Scripture they were obliged to mention the subject of the subdivision in which the words occurred. There was no numbering of the subdivisions in the copies of the Hebrew Scriptures, but the division was effected by a break in the line similar to the ending of a paragraph, by a dash between two minor sections or clauses, and even by a mark similar to our colon.

"In the early ages of Christianity various attempts were made to effect a systematic division of all the Scriptures. The Gospels were divided into sections, called in the Greek *titloi,* and in the Latin *breves;* and in the third century these divisions were further subdivided by Ammonius into shorter sections, called *kephalaia* in the Greek language, and *capitula* in the Latin; and which, from the name of the inventor, were known as Ammonian sections. The subdivision of the Gospels, commenced by Ammonius, was carried still further in the fifth century by Euthalius, who divided the Acts and epistles into sections, and prefixed to each section a sort of summary of its contents.

"The modern division of the Bible into chapters and verses has usually been attributed to Hugues de St. Cher (Hugo de Sancto Caro), provincial of the Dominicans in France, afterward cardinal in Spain (died A. D. 1263). More recent investigations, however, ascribe the introduction of this mode of dividing the Scriptures to Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 1228. The New Testament was first divided into verses in the edition produced by Robert Stephens in 1551.

"It may be remarked here that the analysis of the chapters in the English version, and the titles and subscriptions to the books of the New Testament, are entirely the work of man, and form no part of the inspired writings. 'As might be expected,' said Dr. Angus, speaking of the division into chapters, etc., 'these divisions are very imperfect, and even when not inaccurate they tend to break the sense and obscure the meaning. As a rule, no importance is to be attached to the division of verses or of chapters, unless it coincides with the division of paragraphs. Follow the pauses of the narrative, and mark the change of the subjects discussed. The division of the subject matter into paragraphs is denoted in our English Bible by the sign ¶. The weakness of the division into chapters in some cases will be apparent to the reader on referring to Acts 21 and 22, where the address of Paul to the Jews in the latter chapter is cut off from the account of the events which led to his making this address. Awkward breaks of this kind, and the separation of matter at the end of one chapter and the beginning of the chapter that immediately follows it, are, in many cases, guarded against in the Revised Version; for instance, see John 7:53 and 8:1."

A good memory drill is furnished by memorizing in order the books of the Bible, with number of chapters in each:

*The Old Testament. 39 books; 929 chapters.*

1. The Pentateuch: Gen. (50), Ex. (40), Lev. (27), Num. (36), Deut. (34).

2. Twelve Historical Books: Josh. (24), Judg. (21), Ruth (4), 1 Sam. (31), 2 Sam. (24), 1 Kings (22), 2 Kings (25), 1 Chron. (29), 2 Chron. (36), Ezra (10), Neh. (13), Esther (10).

3. Poetical Books or Wisdom Literature: Job (42), Psalms (150), Prov. (31), Eccl. (12), Solomon's Song (8).

4. Prophetical Books—Major Prophets: Isa. (66), Jer. (52), Lam. (5), Ezek. (48), Dan. (12); Minor Prophets: Hos. (14), Joel (3), Amos (9), Ob. (1), Jonah (4), Micah (7), Nahum (3), Hab. (3), Zeph. (3), Hag. (2), Zech. (14), Mal. (4).

*The New Testament. 27 books; 260 chapters.*

1. Historical Books: Matt. (28), Mark (16), Luke (24), John (21), Acts (28).

2. Epistles of Paul: Rom. (16), 1 Cor. (16), 2 Cor. (13), Gal. (6), Eph. (6), Phil. (4), Col. (4), 1 Thess. (5), 2 Thess. (3), 1 Tim. (6), 2 Tim. (4), Titus (3), Philemon (1), Heb. (13).

3. General Epistles: James (5), 1 Peter (5), 2 Peter (3), 1 John (5), 2 John (1), 3 John (1), Jude (1).

4. Prophecy: Revelation (22).

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Into what two general divisions is the Bible divided?

2. Name the three great divisions of the Hebrew Old Testament, with the books under each division.

3. How is the English Old Testament divided, according to subject matter?

4. Give a chronological list of the books of the Old Testament.

5. What are the divisions of the New Testament books?

6. Give (1) a doctrinal, and (2) a chronological arrangement of Paul's epistles.

7. Who divided the Bible into chapters and verses as we have it to-day?

8. Give from memory the books of the Bible in order, and the number of chapters in each book.

# PART II

## THE BIBLE

## HOW TO STUDY IT

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15.)

## A PRAYER.

Lord Jesus Christ, open the ears and eyes of my mind, that I may hear and understand Thy Word and do Thy will. I am a stranger and a pilgrim on earth! Hide not Thy commandments from me. Take away the covering from mine eyes, that I may see wonderful things in Thy law.—*Ephraem Syrus.*

Eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, vouchsafe to me Thy grace, that I may well and faithfully study Thy holy Scriptures, and seek Christ therein and there find Him, and through Him have eternal life.—*Luther.*

O, Lord God, if it please Thee through me to do somewhat to Thy glory, and not to my praise or the praise of any man,—out of Thy pure grace and mercy give to me a right understanding of Thy Word.—*Luther.*

Give to me, O dear Lord God, Thy grace, that I may rightly understand Thy Word; and much more, that I may do it. And O dearest Lord Jesus Christ, if Thou seest that this my study will not be alone to Thy glory, let me rather be ignorant of every letter, and give Thou to this poor sinner only so much as is Thy praise.—*Luther.*

# CHAPTER I.

## INTRODUCTION.

"Man can weary himself in any secular affair, but diligently to search the Scriptures is to him tedious and burdensome. Few covet to be mighty in the Scriptures, though convinced their great concern is enveloped in them."—*Locke.*

### 1. *The Bible demands study.*

If the Bible is what we have sought to prove it to be in the preceding chapters, namely, the inspired Word of the living God, and the only safe rule for Christian guidance and daily living, it follows that it must deserve our most reverent and thoughtful study. It is not, as one has so well said, to be used as an heirloom or talisman, or as an old sheathed sword hung up on our walls, but is to be read and used.

And it is not enough simply to *read* it; we must *study* it. We must not rest satisfied by glancing over its surface; we must be willing to dig down into its depths. Surely we shall find much precious substance therein. The very essence of Christ's teaching was that we should "search the Scriptures."

This must be the main business of the life of the Christian. Whatever the man of the world may do in this regard, we cannot, we must not, we will not, neglect this Word of God, this living bread which came down from heaven.

*2. The Bible demands method in study.*

Much might be said touching the method or methods in Bible study. One of the reasons—possibly the primary one—why people get so little pleasure and profit out of Bible study, is because of the lack of method, or, what is possibly worse, the use of an inappropriate one.

It may be truly said that no one method is sufficient, and yet one method is better than none. A combination of methods, however, results in the most good. We must come to the study of the sacred writings in a methodical and not in a haphazard way. The Bible is an orderly book, written in a logical manner, and the student of its pages must recognize this if he would discover its hidden depths of meaning.

It is the purpose of Part II. in this book to advocate and illustrate what are recognized as the most profitable ways of studying the Scriptures. One method may appeal to some readers, another to others. Enough methods are set forth, however, to suit all diligent, earnest and reverent students. The ideal method would doubtless be a combination of all. It might be advisable to take them in the order in which they are presented in this book.

Method is more essential than time. A little time each day is enough for the man who can not give more. They are making a great mistake who, because they can not, or think they can not, give an hour or half an hour a day to Bible study, give nothing. Ten or fifteen minutes spent daily *in carrying out a plan* will accomplish wonders. But there should be a plan.

The results of Bible study should be written down and put in shape as outlines and notes for Bible talks, or for use in Bible classes. They should be reviewed in thought during the day. We should school ourselves to meditate upon them day and night.

Knowledge is accumulative. The Bible is a great book, the vastest book in the world. No man will ever know it all. But we will know more from year to year. The essential thing is to begin actual study, and to carry it on persistently and systematically. In time, small and ignorant as we are, we shall know more and more of the great, wise thoughts that the Infinite God has written down for us in His Book.

*3. The spirit in which the Bible should be studied.*

"God has determined that things divine shall enter through the heart into the mind, and not through the mind into the heart. In divine things, therefore, it is necessary to love them in order to know them, and we enter into truth only through love."—*Pascal.*

"An inward interest in the doctrines of theology is needful for a Biblical interpreter. The study of the New Testament presupposes as an indispensable requisite a sentiment of piety and religious experience. The Scripture will not be rightfully and spiritually comprehended unless the Spirit of God Himself becomes the interpreter of His words."—*Neander.*

Humility and devoutness of mind should characterize our approach to the sacred Scriptures. We must continually seek the guidance of its Author—the Holy Spirit. We must ever bathe our consciences in that divine element—the atmosphere of prayer. The study of poetry requires a poetic taste; to appreciate art there must be a taste for the artistic; the study of philosophy requires a philosophic spirit. So the student of the sacred Word must be imbued with the divine Spirit. He who comes to the Scripture with a spirit of criticism, or with the consciousness of wilful and known sin that is being practiced by him

daily, will find it a dumb oracle. It will open upside down, it will have no loving, consoling message for him (1 Cor. 2:14-16).

*4. A feeling of deep dependence upon the Holy Spirit.*

In all our efforts to understand the Scriptures we must not for one moment forget that it is the office of the Holy Spirit to make known unto us the mind of God, to teach us all things, to lead us into the truth. It is the anointing of the Holy Ghost that we need as students of the divine Word. Mere human wisdom or learning will not meet the need here. We must have that wisdom which cometh from above, and which God has promised to give to those who in faith ask for it. No one but the Spirit knoweth the mind of God, and no one but He can communicate the thoughts of that mind to us. Let us, then, surrender ourselves to the Spirit, holding back nothing from His complete control, and beseeching Him to open unto us the Scriptures.

PROFITABLE AND UNPROFITABLE METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY.

There are many various ways of reading and studying the Bible, which may be grouped together and classified as profitable and unprofitable methods: let us look first of all at some of the unprofitable methods.

*1. Unprofitable methods.*

The Pharisees of old studied the Scriptures with scrupulous care and nicety, making laborious researches in the letter thereof, even to counting the number of words and letters in the various books, in the thought that by doing this they might preserve the Holy Writings entire and intact, undamaged by the loss even of a single

letter, however small. It is to this that our Saviour alluded when He said that 'one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.' This extreme care of God's Word, although it has been, by God's blessing, attended with excellent results as far as we are concerned, was of no benefit whatever to the Pharisees, but rather the contrary, for they made no endeavor to ascertain the spirit and meaning of the books of the Old Covenant, to identify Christ through the types of Him to be found in the books themselves, and in the ceremonial law, and to come to Him that they might have Life. Wise in their own conceits (Rom. 12:16), they were content to search the Scriptures in their own strength without seeking help and light from God, and the awful consequence was that they were left to die in their sins (John 8:21,24).

In this surely we may see a danger signal to warn us from pursuing a similar course, to prevent us from attempting to read the Scriptures in a cold, curious, careless, or superficial manner; but besides this, there are other unprofitable ways of reading the Bible, which may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. To read the Bible with no other intent than to pick out something to entertain the fancy and to pass away the time for want of other employment.

2. To look upon the reading of Holy Scripture as a mere outward duty or task, to the performance of which men think themselves obliged by the law of God, without having due regard to the gracious invitation and encouragement thereunto given to them in the Gospel.

3. To busy oneself too much in finding out and dwelling upon the opinions and notions that men, both ancient and modern, have entertained of the Scriptures, and the explanations they have given of certain parts of Scripture.

4. To spend much labor and time in trying to comprehend and unravel the meaning of difficult passages of Scripture, of which even the ablest men have not been able to do more than give a mere conjectural interpretation.

5. To fall into too general a way of reading the Bible, making no close and particular application of the truths that are read and the teaching that is given; or, if application of the Word is made at all, making it to others rather than to oneself.

6. To regard the Bible as nothing more than a book of good moral teaching, and to think it is enough to endeavor, in one's own strength, to live up to the same.

*2. Profitable methods.*

Let us now turn to methods that are helpful to reading with profit and to the soul's health and salvation.

1. We should seek to read the Scriptures with the intent to have our understanding enlightened and our will sanctified by them. Peter, after declaring that the early preachers of the Gospel had 'not followed cunningly-devised fables' (2 Peter 1:16), says, 'We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts.' (2 Peter 1:19.)

2. It has been well said that true simplicity of heart, that is, a sincere and unfeigned desire to be made wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3:15), is the best preparative the reader can bring to this sacred study. And if it be attended with an unshaken resolution to order his whole life and conduct according to the directions the Word proposeth, then he cannot fail of obtaining the end for which the Scripture is given.

3. The reading of the Bible must be attended with meditation, by which men 'have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come' (Heb. 6:5). David was accustomed to ponder much and long over God's Word, and he says, 'While I was musing, the fire burned' (Psalm 39:3). With meditation, it is almost unnecessary to say, prayer must go hand in hand.

4. Above all things it is necessary that every Bible reader should be sincere and impartial in strict and constant self-examination, after reading the Scriptures. To read without self-examination is to give the evil one all the better chance of taking away the Word out of the heart, lest it should produce, first, faith, and then salvation; or allow the good seed of the Word to wither through lack of nourishment, or to be "choked with cares, and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Luke 8:12-14).

### MEDITATION AND SELF-EXAMINATION.

It may be useful to the inexperienced to set before them brief examples of meditation on a portion of Holy Scripture, and the self-examination which should follow thereon. To append suitable prayers, to be used before and after reading the Bible, will occupy too much space; and, moreover, all spiritually-minded persons will learn to suit these to their circumstances and requirements. As a general prayer nothing can be better or more appropriate than the following collect appointed by the Church of England:

*Prayer.* Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of Thy

Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*"

*Scripture Reading.* In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1).

*Meditation.* How great must God be, who by His work hath created the heaven and the earth! Since heaven and earth are so great, so glorious, and so beautiful, how much greater and more glorious must God Himself be who made them! He is infinitely greater than all the creatures He has produced. Of a truth the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork (Psalm 19:1).

God hath created heaven and earth and all creatures contained therein. He hath also created me and fashioned all my members. How great an honor is it to be the workmanship of Almighty God! What He has created He has also preserved thousands of years by the same Word that produced it. And as He preserves the whole, He also preserves every particular and individual being.

*Self-Examination.* Did I ever duly consider from whence heaven and earth have their first and original being; or have I passed over in a careless manner so great a work of God's own hands? Did I ever admire the omnipotent power of the Creator, "who calleth those things which be not as though they were (Rom. 4:17), by whose word the worlds were framed" (Heb. 11:3)?

Have I perhaps admired the heavens more than my Father who is in them? Have I loved the creature more than God who made it? Has the viewing of the heavens raised my mind to heavenly thoughts and contemplations? and have I even now my conversation in heaven, where I forever desire to be?

The heavens and the earth had a beginning, and will pass away again in God's own time: have I, then, duly considered that my heart is not to be fixed on heaven, or earth, or any perishing creature, but on God alone, with whom there is no such variableness?

The blessed Trinity has created heaven and earth and myself also, who am but a small particle of God's creation. Have I, therefore, remembered my Creator from the days of my youth, and humbly worshipped Him from whom I have my very life and being? Did I ever, by reviewing the natural creation, elevate my mind to that spiritual creation whereby a new heart is created and a new spirit is put within us?

God has made the heavens and adorned them with sun and moon, and other bright and glorious bodies; and have I not too often abused the light thereof in sinning ungratefully, by the benefit and direction of their light, against their Creator and mine?

Has God created the earth and all the creatures contained therein? Truly He created them for no other end than to promote His own glory thereby. Have I always used the creatures to this end; or have I, by pride and luxury, by lust and vanity, subjected them to still greater bondage, and thereby frustrated the end designed by the Creator?

Did I ever consider that as by the word of God the light was brought out of darkness, so in the new creation a thorough sense of my own corruption and darkness must precede the state of divine illumination?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Give the general reasons for the need of method in Bible study.

2. In what spirit must the Bible be studied?
3. State some unprofitable methods of study.
4. State some profitable methods of study.
5. What is the value of meditation and self-examination.

# CHAPTER II.

## THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE.

"The most illiterate Christian, if he but can read the English Bible, and will take the care to read it in a careful manner, will not only attain all the practical knowledge which is necessary to salvation, but by God's blessing he will become learned in everything relating to his religion to such a degree that he will not be liable to be misled, either by the refuted arguments or the false assertions of those who endeavor to engraft their own opinions upon the oracles of God."—*Horsley.*

It will be proper here to note, first of all, things about the student of the Bible himself, his qualifications for its interpretation.

### 1. The Interpreter Himself.

*1. Faculties with which the interpreter should be endowed.**

(a.) Intellectual faculties.

The interpreter has need of a clear and vigorous understanding, sound judgment, and a certain degree of imagination. The excess of imagination, is, perhaps more to be feared in religious science than elsewhere, because this science tends to exalt this faculty. What is most useful

*See Weidner's *Theological Encyclopedia.*

to the theologian is the equilibrium of all his faculties, rather than the excessive and isolated development of a few.

(b.) Moral faculties.

The Scriptures were evidently written as much for the heart as for the intellect. The interpreter, therefore, in order to accomplish the duties of his office, should possess sensibility. He should seek the aid of his heart, and not bind himself slavishly to the requirements of logic.

*2. Dispositions necessary to the interpreter.*

(a.) Love of truth.

The first disposition which the interpreter ought to cultivate is the love of truth. He should, if possible, undertake the task of interpretation without preconceived opinions. He should be desirous above all to discover the truth, and disposed to modify his ideas in accordance with the result of his examination. To impartiality of mind he should join impartiality of heart, and should be not only impartial and disinterested, but also (so far as corrupt human nature will allow) morally perfect.

(b.) Search for clear ideas.

The second disposition required of the interpreter is the desire to acquire clear ideas. The means to attain clearness is study and meditation. In those matters of religion which surpass intelligence, he ought to comprehend clearly the fact that they do surpass it, but the fact that they do surpass intelligence should not hinder us from believing them, for we can and do believe many things which are above reason.

(c.) Faith and piety.

The interpreter, in order to accomplish his task well, has need of faith and piety. The irreligious interpreter is morally unfit for the task of Biblical interpretation. The interpreter must be conscientious, circumspect, and laborious. He ought constantly to mistrust his passions and opinions, and also be diffident of his ability and even of his success.

*3. Duties of the interpreter.*

(a.) His studies ought to embrace the entire Bible and be frequently repeated. Every theologian ought to be an exegete. But many read only certain portions of the Bible. Many read superficially, without stopping to examine and elucidate obscure passages. Many neglect the original texts. Meditation and constant study of the Holy Scriptures are absolutely necessary to refresh, nourish and render clear, vivid, and fruitful, the knowledge and religious convictions of the theologian. Nor dare this study be ever interrupted.

(b.) His studies ought to be continued with distrust of one's self and with a feeling of one's own weakness.

Luther said: *Oratio, meditatio, tentatio faciunt theologum.* Prayer, study, and experience,—these are the means of theological study.

**2. Some rules for the Interpretation of the Bible.**

*1. Ascertain whether the language of the text is literal or figurative.*

As a rule the Bible interprets its own terms, and, by the context, usually informs the reader as to whether the language used is to be taken in a literal sense or not.

This cannot be accomplished by intellectual science alone. Judgment and good faith, critical tact and impartiality, are also necessary. It is necessary to examine the passage in all its details, critically, exegetically, and faithfully. The figurative sense must be sustained by all these processes before it can be relied upon as the true interpretation.

Our Saviour spoke in figurative language when He said to the Jews: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it again." How do we know this language is figurative? In this instance the narrator says so,—(John 2:19,21,22).

So with Matt. 26:26, 27; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26, in which reference is made to the elements used in the celebration of the Eucharist. It has not literally Jesus' flesh and blood which are spoken of in these passages, but of His flesh and blood represented under the figure of bread and wine.

The words "washing" and "wash" are often used figuratively as well as literally in the Bible. When Naaman was told "to wash in the Jordan seven times," it is impossible not to see that the word is to be taken in its literal sense; but when, as in 1 Cor. 6:11, believing Christians are spoken of as being "washed," it is equally manifest that the word is used figuratively, and that they are washed in the sense of being cleansed from their sin and released from its consequences by the saving efficacy of the blood of Christ.

Sometimes nature itself is drawn upon to illustrate divine truth. For example: the trees of a forest are taken generally to represent men. The lofty ones designate the rulers, or those who are in authority in the state, and the low trees and brush the common people (see Ezekiel 31:5-9; Rev. 7:1-3).

Babylon is used as a figure of the persecuting enemy of the church (Isa. 47:1,2); and of Rome, pagan and papal (Rev. 17:18).

The literal language of Scripture is to be preferred, unless otherwise demanded by the context, parallel passages or analogy. Apply the simple rules of grammar, as directed by a wide-awake common-sense, and take for granted that the Bible means just what it says. True, we are warned that the letter killeth, and the spirit giveth life; but we are also told that every jot and tittle of the law is to be fulfilled. It is better to be unyieldingly literal about the story of Jonah and the great fish than to adopt rationalistic interpretations of the Gospel that make the Word of God of none effect. But we need the twofold caution: not to add nor to take away, especially not to put into the Bible a doctrine that is not there. To find out just what the Bible says will often require very close study, and for this we suggest that the use of the Revised Version and Greek New Testament.

The following quotations from important exegetes serve to emphasize the literal interpretation of Scripture:

*Melancthon* (1497-1560)—"It is necessary in the church diligently to investigate and adhere to the simple, natural, grammatical sense of Scripture. We are to listen to the divine Word, not to corrupt it. We must not play tricks with it by fanciful interpretations, as many in all ages have done. The plain, natural sense of Scripture always carries with it the richest and most valuable instruction."

*Mosheim* (1694-1755)—"Those who performed the office of interpreters (in the first century of the Christian church) studied above all things plainness and perspicuity. The great study of those who embraced the Gospel was

rather to express its divine influence in their dispositions and actions than to examine its doctrines with an excessive curiosity, or to explain them by the rules of human wisdom."

*Luther* (1483-1546)—"The literal meaning of Scripture is the whole foundation of faith, the only thing that stands its ground in distress and temptation."

*2. Ascertain the meaning of words as used by each writer of the Bible.*

All the writers do not use the same word with the same sense of meaning. The usage of the writer and the connection in which it is used must determine the meaning of the particular word.

Take the word "faith" as an example. In Gal. 1:23; 1 Tim. 3:9; 4:1; Acts 24:24, it means the Gospel of which faith in Christ is the great doctrine. In Romans 3:3 it means truth or faithfulness—the fidelity of God in keeping His word. In Acts 17:31 it means proof or evidence. In Romans 14:23 it means a conscientious conviction of duty.

Again, take the word "flesh." In Ezekiel 11:19 it is used in contrast to stone. In John 1:14, Romans 1:3; 9:3, it refers to human nature without any reference to sinfulness. In Romans 8:13 and Ephesians 2:3, it points to human nature as both sinful and corrupt.

So it is with the word "salvation." In Exodus 14:13 it means outward safety and deliverance; in James 5:15 bodily healing; in Romans 13:11 the whole of the blessing which Christ has secured for believers. Sometimes it means simply the Gospel, as in Hebrews 2:3.

*Sometimes the sense in which the word is used is made known or defined by the writer himself.*

In Hebrews 11, for instance, "faith" is first defined and then illustrated. It is said to be a confident expectation of things hoped for, a perfect persuasion of things not seen; and then examples are given of both parts of this definition.

The word "perfection"—over which so many are stumbling in this day—is defined in the several parts of the Bible. In Psalms 37:37 it is used as being synonymous even with uprightness or sincerity, a real, unfeigned goodness, in opposition to sham goodness; and this is doubtless its real meaning in the Old Testament (1 Chron. 12:33,38). In the New Testament it means either the possession of clear and accurate knowledge of divine truth, or the possession of *all* the graces of Christian character in a higher or lower degree. The first is the meaning in Hebrews 5:14; 1 Corinthians 2:6; Philippians 3:15. The second is the meaning in James 1:4, where the word is defined as "entire, lacking nothing." In 2 Peter 1:5-7 the graces which make the perfect Christian are enumerated.

*Sometimes words are to be understood, according to the context, to mean the very opposite of their usual sense.*

In 1 Kings 22:15 "Go, and prosper" was spoken ironically, and meant the very reverse.

In Numbers 22:20 "Rise up, and go" appears from verses 12 and 32 to imply, "If, after all I have told you, your heart is set on violating My command, do it at your own risk."

The use of this form of speech may also be seen in 1 Kings 18:27; Judges 10:14; Mark 7:9; 1 Corinthians 4:8.

*3. The circumstances peculiar to the writer and those written to, must be taken into consideration.*

We should be more likely to translate literally what we find in historical books than what we find in poetical books. We should be more likely to emphasize chronology than the details of parables.

The individuality of each writer, his style and mode of expression, the student of the Scripture must become well acquainted with.

Under what circumstances were the words written, and what was the character of the people to whom they were addressed? What state of moral sentiment was prevailing at the time of writing? These, and many other circumstances peculiar to each book and author we must take cognizance of if we would become interpreters of the Bible.

*4. Another and exceedingly important factor must be noted in the interpretation of the Bible. Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon it. It is what we call the Analogy of Faith* (Rom. 12:6).

This term means the comparing of Scripture with Scripture in order to arrive at its true meaning. It at once recognizes a divine unity running through the Scripture, and is a proof of its inspiration.

The analogy of faith is identical with "the whole tenor of Scripture." It is a gathering together of all the passages bearing upon any one subject and comparing them one with the other, thereby arriving at the teaching of "the whole Scripture" on that given subject. If, for example, an expositor were to speak of justification by faith as though it freed us from obligation to holiness, such an interpretation must be rejected, because it counteracts the main design and spirit of the Gospel.

In Prov. 16:4 it is said, "The Lord has made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." The idea that the wicked were created that they might be condemned, which some have founded upon this passage, is inconsistent with innumerable parts of Scripture, and therefore cannot be true (see Psalm 145:9; Ezekiel 18:23; 2 Peter 3:9). The meaning, as determined by the analogy of faith, is that all evil shall contribute to the glory of God, and promote the accomplishment of His adorable designs.

"The Scriptures being composed of several obscure texts of Scripture mingled with clear ones," said *Boyle* (1627-1691), "many devout persons have rather chosen to read other books, which, being free from difficulties, might promise more instruction; but as the moon, notwithstanding her spots, gives more light than the stars that are luminous, so the Scripture, notwithstanding its dark passages, will afford a Christian more light than the best authors."

*Newton, Bishop* (1704-1782)—"Make the Word of God as much as possible its own interpreter. You will best understand the Word of God by conferring it with itself, 'comparing spiritual things with spiritual'" (1 Cor. 2:13).

*Lowth* (1661-1732)—"Scripture doth best interpret itself."

The tenor of these extracts is to show that devout Christian men of all ages have been impressed with the necessity of reading God's Word reverently and comparing Scripture with Scripture.

5. *A knowledge of the manners and customs of the people to whom the Bible was originally written, is a great aid to the student in its interpretation.*

The houses of the poor in the east were generally built with mud, and thus became fitting images of the frailty

of human life. This fact helps us to understand such passages as Job 24:16; Ezekiel 12:5; Matthew 6:19.

The houses of the rich were of a more elaborate order, comprising porches, porticoes, waiting-rooms, guest-chambers. The roof was flat, surrounded by a battlement or breastwork. In summer the people slept on the roof, and at all times it was used as a place of prayer and devotion. These facts explain the following and many other passages: Deut. 22:8; 1 Samuel 9:25; 2 Samuel 11:2; Isaiah 22:1; Acts 10:9; Mark 13:15; Mark 2:4.

The dress of the Jews consisted commonly of two garments; the one a close-bodied frock or shirt, generally with long sleeves, and reaching a little below the knee, and later to the ankle; and the other a loose robe of some yards in length, fastened over the shoulders and thrown around the body. Within doors the first dress only was worn. It was regarded, however, as a kind of undress, in which it was not usual to pay visits, or to walk out. Hence persons clothed in it alone are said in Scripture to be naked (Isaiah 20:2-4; John 13:4; 21:7), or to have laid aside their garments.

It will amply repay the student to purchase such books as *Bissel's Antiquities* or *Bennet's Archaeology,* on the ancient customs and manner of the Jews. These throw a flood of light upon the Scripture not to be gotten in any other way.

### 3. The Sources of the Interpetation of the Bible.

The sources of interpretation are four, viz.: The text, the context, parallel passages, resources foreign to the text.

It is absolutely necessary that these four be taken into consideration by the student. In no other way can a cor-

rect exegesis of any portion of the sacred writings be obtained.

*1. The text itself.*

The first thing to be done in the study of any text is to find out what the text itself really teaches.

In this connection a knowledge of the original language of the Bible is found exceedingly valuable. It affords the student an opportunity of ascertaining the various shades of meaning which are impossible to find in the mere translation. If you can, then, study the text in the language in which it was originally written. Find out the exact meaning of each word, phrase, and sentence. Let there be no hurry or haste in the matter. Such diligent and thorough study of the text you owe to God, to yourself, and the people to whom you minister.

The student who is not able to read the text in the original need not despair of ascertaining its true meaning. Here the Revised Version comes to his help. In spite of its supposed inconsistencies this version is beyond question a very literal translation. Study the text in the Revised Version as well as in the Authorized. A comparison of 1 Thess. 4:15 in the Authorized and Revised Versions will illustrate the advantage of the latter. The word "prevent" in the Authorized is translated (correctly) "precede" in the Revised Version. The word originally meant "go before," but words sometimes become obsolete or change their meaning. Here is an illustration of the latter.

In our search for truth we should not be on the lookout for the brilliant or ingenious, but the true. Never sacrifice truth for brilliancy or for the sake of making an impression. We should not juggle with Scripture. In all things it behooves us as students and teachers to "rightly divide the Word of Truth."

One ought to remember also in this connection that invaluable help in the study of the text is to be found in the similarity between the Old and New Testament language of the same text. See and compare Psalm 8:3-8, with Hebrews 2:5-8.

For helps in the study of the *text itself* we may mention and suggest the use of grammatical concordances, such as *Young's Analytical,* and *Strong's Exhaustive Concordances,* also the use of grammatical commentaries, such as Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, Meyer, and Godet.

*2. The Context.*

By this we mean what goes before and what follows after the special portion of the sacred text under consideration.

To find the real context of a passage one may have to go back a chapter or two. This is true especially of the seventh chapter of Romans. Before this chapter can be correctly interpreted it is necessary to go back to chapter I and catch the drift of the whole book.

Another passage worth noticing is 2 Timothy 3:16. This verse is constantly quoted as a proof text for the inspiration of the whole Bible. It is nothing of the kind, as the New Testament was not then written and in use. It *does* announce the great truth that the *Old Testament* was inspired of God. Concerning the New Testament it says absolutely nothing. We must look to other sources for proof of its inspiration.

Many interpreters neglect the context. They snatch a word out of its connection, and thus get a distorted view of doctrine. The writer heard a fine sermon on the text of Hebrews 7:25. The preacher in a very brilliant way sought to show the power of Christ to save the lowest and most degraded of sinners. Especially did he emphasize the

word "uttermost" to prove this willingness of Christ. Now this text does not prove Christ's ability to save sinners of the worst kind, although many other passages do (1 Timothy 1:15; Luke 19:10; Isaiah 1:18; etc.). Had the preacher read the context carefully he would not have chosen this passage as his text. The context here shows that this passage sets forth the difference in the nature of the priesthood of Christ and that of the Levites. They, by reason of death, could minister but temporarily; He, by reason of His ever living, is able to save (or minister) *for evermore.* The word "uttermost" is best translated "evermore." The context demands such a translation.

Study the context. Read carefully what *goes before* and what *comes after* the passage you are seeking to expound.

*3. The use of parallel texts.*

"Particular diligence should be used in comparing the parallel texts of the Old and New Testaments," said *Horsley* (1733-1806). "It should be a rule with every one who would read the Holy Scriptures with advantage and improvement, to compare every text which may seem either important for the doctrine it may contain or remarkable for the turn of expression with the parallel passages in other parts of Holy Writ, that is, with passages in which the subject matter is the same, the sense equivalent, or the turn of expression similar." Thus obscure words and phrases will become clear and plain.

God, for example, sometimes represents Himself as giving men to drink of a cup which He holds in His hand; they take it and fall prostrate to the ground in fearful intoxication. The figure is given with much brevity and with no word of explanation in some of the prophecies (Nahum 3:11; Habakkuk 2:16; Psalms 75:8). In Isaiah

51:17-23 it is fuly explained, and the meaning of the figure becomes clear.

In Mark 8:36 we have these words: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" What is meant here by the word "soul"? The study of the parallel passage in Luke 9:25 throws light on the word. It reads as follows: "For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose *himself?*" From these two passages we learn that "soul" and "himself" are equivalent. See and compare also Mark 11:8 with Matthew 21:8.

*4 Resources outside of the text.*

After the student has carefully and prayerfully studied the text, the context, and the parallel passages, he may safely read what other authorities have to say on the text. Cogitation first; the thoughts of others afterwards.

The resources outside of the text would include commentaries, concordances, text-expositions, etc.

## 4. Of the Utility and Application of Rules in Interpretation.*

It must have occurred to the reader that underneath the rules of interpretation there are some general principles common to all language which regulate the application of them. Those principles it is important to state, as they both justify the rules and aid in applying them.

To perceive the meaning of most parts of the Bible which teach the fundamental truths of the Gospel, it is only necessary to know the subject and the language employed. If the Bible be in our own tongue, and we understand what the topic is of which it treats, the meaning

*From Angus' *Bible Handbook*.

will generally be plain. No instance can be given in Scripture of an obscure passage concerning which a man may rationally suppose that there is any doctrinal truth contained in it, which is not elsewhere explained.

The great advantage of rules of interpretation is not to discover the meaning of plain passages of Scripture, but to ascertain the meaning of such as are ambiguous or obscure.

Yet, as on many points of importance we need to compare Scripture, in order to ascertain and *prove* its meaning, and as such comparison is itself part of our discipline, promotes our holiness, and is adapted to unfold the treasures of divine truth, it is of great moment that the humblest Christian should understand these rules, and apply them. Revelation is to be the study of our lives, and it is plainly the will of God, that all the resources of learning, industry, and prayer, should be employed in the search.

So dependent is man for his knowledge of the divine will upon the motive and temper of his inquiries and the teaching of the Spirit of God, that a prayerful and humble Christian with few advantages will often gain a more accurate and extensive acquaintance with Scripture than one of higher mental attainments, but of feeble piety. The exercise of a teachable and prayerful spirit, therefore, is among the most important principles of Biblical interpretation.

### THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.

The true meaning of any passage of Scripture is not every sense which the words will bear, nor is it every sense which is true in itself, but that which is intended by the inspired writers, or in some cases by the Holy Spirit, though imperfectly understood by the writers themselves.

The sense of Scripture is to be determined by the words: a *true* knowledge of the words is the knowledge of the sense.

The meaning of words is fixed by the usage of language. Usage must be ascertained whenever possible from Scripture itself.

The words of Scripture must be taken in their common meaning, unless such meaning is shown to be inconsistent with other words in the sentence, with the argument or context, or with other parts of Scripture.

Of two meanings, that one is generally to be preferred which was most obvious to the comprehension of the hearers or original readers of the inspired passage, allowing for those figurative expressions which were so familiar as to be no exception to this general rule.

The meaning attached to the words of Scripture must always agree with the context. When the common meaning is inconsistent with the context it must be abandoned, and such other meaning adopted as fulfills the requirements and conditions of the passage, and can be proved to be sanctioned by usage, either in common writers, or in the Bible.

The scope of a passage, or the reasoning of the writer, can be employed to determine which of two senses is to be adopted only, as the scope or reasoning is clear; nor will the scope *fix* the meaning unless a particular meaning is required by the scope.

The parallel passage that fixes the meaning of words must either contain the same words used in a somewhat similar sense, or it must evidently speak of the same thing, or of something so similar as to afford occasion for comparison.

### THE ANALOGY OF FAITH.

No doctrine founded upon a single text belongs to the analogy of faith. The analogy of faith is chiefly of use in teaching us to reject an interpretation which is not Scriptural. If both the supposed meanings of a passage are consistent with this analogy, the rule cannot be applied so as to decide the meaning. In controversial reasoning this rule is only applicable on the supposition that the doctrine to be applied for the purpose of interpretation is *admitted* to be Scriptural. If it is not admitted, we cannot apply it in the interpretation of a disputed text.

Theology is the whole meaning of Scripture, or it is the sense taught in the whole of Scripture, as that sense is modified, limited, and explained by Scripture itself. Scriptural theology is not one thing, and the meaning of Scripture another. It is a consistently interpreted representation of the statements of the Bible, on the various facts, doctrines, and precepts which the book of God reveals.

### QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Name, and explain briefly, certain faculties with which the interpreter of the Bible should be endowed.
2. Name, and explain briefly, certain dispositions of the interpreter.
3. What are the duties of the interpreter?
4. How would you ascertain whether the language of any given text is literal or figurative?
5. How would you ascertain the precise meaning of words as used by each writer of the Bible?
6. What is meant by the analogy of faith? Show its importance in the interpretation of Scripture.
7. Give one instance to prove the value of a knowledge of Bible manners and customs.
8. What are the sources of interpretation of the Bible? Explain their value.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF THE BIBLE.

The revelation of divine truth as contained in the doctrines and precepts of the Bible is not set forth therein in a systematic way. That is to say, all that the Bible has to say on any given doctrine is not to be found on any one page, in any one (or more) book, and in the writings of any one inspired penman. The great truths are scattered all over its pages from Genesis to Revelation. It is the task of the student to classify and systematize the teachings of the Scriptures. God's truth is revealed to us in the sacred volume in different forms—by way of authority (such as law), or history, or biography, or example, or promise, and oftentimes two or three of these are involved in one. A command sometimes includes a doctrine; a doctrine a promise; and both doctrine and promise a correspondent duty.

If the doctrines, precepts, and promises of Scripture were placed by themselves we would then have a *system* of truth presented to us. Inasmuch, however, as this is not the case, it becomes the obvious duty of the student to systematize these truths.

A game frequently played by our children will illustrate this point. It is called the "Geography Game." It consists of a piece of cardboard, on which is printed the map of the world, and which is cut into many pieces of various sizes and shapes; all mixed up together. The work of the child is to form out of these scattered pieces the

complete map. So is it with the student of God's Word. He is called upon to gather up the fragments of some great Bible theme, scattered here and there throughout its pages, and make one grand system of truth.

This order of things is not peculiar to Scripture alone. Both in nature and in Providence facts and objects are scattered in endless variety. It is the business of the scientist to detect unity and order among them all. From this it may be inferred that the general laws which regulate the universe, and the rule of conduct by which men govern their lives are alike facts reduced to a system by intelligence and care.

### RULES FOR FRAMING A SYSTEM OF SCRIPTURAL TRUTH.

In general, we should bring together all the texts that refer to the same subject, compare them, restrict the expressions of one text by those of another, and explain the whole consistently.

The passages referring to one subject may be found by the use of a concordance, a *Topical Text Book, a Bible Text Cyclopedia,* or *Bagster's Treasury of Scripture Knowledge.* The last named book no student should be without. It should be a constant companion in the study.

1. *Aim to gather your views of Christian doctrine primarily from the New Testament.*

The statements of New Testament doctrine should be held consistently with one another, and with the facts and clear revelation of the Old Testament. As an example of this, let us cite Paul. In Romans, especially in the fourth chapter, he undertakes to amplify and explain the Christian doctrine of justification by faith by reference to the teaching of the Old Testament.

2. *Explain ambiguous and figurative passages by those that are clear and literal; a passage briefly described by one more fully discussed* (e. g. Hebrews 11:1 by the whole chapter); *general assertions* (e. g. Rom. 3:10,23) *by those which treat of the same passage with limitations and exceptions* (1 John 3:8).

3. *Different passages which treat of the same doctrine must be explained consistently with one another. There must be no lack of unity and harmony of teaching.*

For example, the Bible declares that repentance (Acts 5:31; Luke 13:3) and faith (Philippians 1:29; Mark 16:16) are the gifts of God, and yet men are held guilty if they do not possess them. This must be reconciled. The student must show the willingness of God to bestow these gifts on any soul that wants them, and the guilt incurred by man in rejecting the offer of God's gifts.

4. ***In our treatment of doctrines their practical aspect must not be lost sight of.***

It may be said that no doctrine stands without its practical application to the daily lives of men. To miss that application is to miss one of God's great intentions in revealing the truth to His creatures. Many students seem to think that the doctrines of Scripture were given for discussion, instead of utility. For example:

1. The doctrine of election has a practical truth in it, and that is, to show the unmerited favor of God to man, and to cut off all hope of salvation by works. It also accounts for the unbelief of the Jews (Romans 9 and 11) without excusing it. Considered without these applications this great doctrine might reveal caprice, injustice, and partiality on the part of God.

2. In Romans 5 the sin of Adam is enlarged upon only to magnify the grace of God.

3. The doctrine of the Trinity also has a practical bearing, being used generally in connection with spiritual blessings (2 Corinthians 13:14).

*5. We must take cognizance of the comparative importance of the truths taught.*

1. All truth is not of equal importance. The question as to whether hell is literal fire or not is not so important as that faith in Christ is necessary for salvation. The doctrines treating of the person and work of Christ and the Holy Spirit are of infinitely more importance than the doctrine of future things or the condition of the lost.

2. Note what things are omitted in one book, or in several, or in many, and then take for granted that what is omitted is probably not as important as that which is mentioned in all. The teaching of the miraculous feeding of the 5,000 is undoubtedly very important because each of the four Gospels records it.

3. Mark the subjects oftenest recommended to our attention by our Lord and by His apostles. For instance, the institution of the Lord's supper and its commemorative character, for this is thrice mentioned in the words of the institution.

4. Observe carefully what is common to the two dispensations, the Jewish and the Christian.

5. Observe the value ascribed in Scripture itself to any truth or precept that it contains. Sometimes certain things are set forth as preferential: for instance love rather than faith or hope, in 1 Corinthians 13.

Note here the importance of the death and resurrection of our Lord, and their connection with justification and

holiness. The fact of the resurrection and ascension of our Lord as an evidence of His completed work, and a pledge of His people's resurrection, is mentioned in the epistles alone more than fifty times. Any view of the Gospel, therefore, which omits these facts is not the Gospel of the Scriptures.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Does the Bible present a system of truth?
2. Give the rules for framing such a system.
3. How would you determine the comparative importance of the truths taught?

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE AS A WHOLE.

"I know not a better rule of reading the Scripture than to read through from beginning to end; and when we have finished it once, to begin it again. We shall meet with many passages which we can make little improvement of; but not so many in the second reading as in the first; and fewer in the third than in the second."—*John Newton.*

*A general familiarity with the Bible as a whole, and with its stories and its words and its spirit, is necessary.*

The only way of securing this is to read the Bible through and through, over and over again. There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible. Reading two chapters each day and five additional on Sunday will carry one through the Bible in a year. Or if one will read three chapters of the Old Testament each morning and two chapters of the New each evening, by the end of the year he will have read through the Old Testament once and the New three times. George Müller's plan was thus to read the Bible through over and over again until it became so familiar to him that he said he felt ashamed if any one had to resort to a concordance when he was present. I have known many ignorant people to acquire a wonderful knowledge of the Bible in this way, and with that knowledge wonderful influence and power.

There is scarcely any better way to get an exact and rich acquaintance with the Bible phrases and truths.

One's whole conversation, and especially one's ease and unction in testimony and prayer, are enriched by this ready familiarity with the Scriptures.

It is the best sort of a foundation for other plans and methods of study that are of a more detailed and specific nature.

Scripture must be regarded as a system from beginning to end; and the different books and sentences must be interpreted as the component and connected parts of a great whole.

Dr. C. I. Scofield once said: "I gave ten years, from 1879 to 1889, to a comprehensive, synthetic study of the entire Bible. I sought to possess myself as perfectly as I might of the Bible story—the mere movements of events, from the 'beginning' of Genesis 1:1 to the 'Even so come' of Revelation 22:20."

But little advantage can be gained from dipping into Holy Scripture here and there. To get a clear knowledge of the Bible it is best to read it through and through in the order in which the sacred books have been arranged, until God's blessing on the reader's perseverance shall have put him in possession of a good general idea of its whole tenor, and of its aim, scope, and purpose. It is manifest that a clear understanding of God's Word can only be arrived at by long and patient study: nothing can be done in this world without labor, and it is as useless to expect to arrive at a knowledge of the Bible without prayer and study as it is to fill one's barns with corn without going through the processes of ploughing, sowing, and reaping. Roberts has well said that the generality of Scripture hath such a contexture and coherence one part with another, that small insight into it will be gained by reading it confusedly. Therefore, read the whole in order.

A very potent reason for the study of the Bible as a whole is found in the fact that the revelation of God to His creatures as found in the Scriptures is progressive. The truths of God are capable of progress. There is a growth of doctrinal teaching.

Dr. Scofield says of this method of Bible study:

"I think I shall never forget the delight of the discovery that all Scripture is one consistent and progressive revelation, that there is not a revealed truth in the Bible which is not conformed to this law. Somewhere, every truth of revelation has its point of first emergence—e. g., redemption in Genesis 3:15; sacrifice in Genesis 3:21,—and that invariably from that point, by many pens, in many ages, that truth is developed into fulness; that, arranged chronologically, the successive writers take up the revelation at the precise point where their predecessors left it, never recurring to a more primary or elementary form of the revelation.

"With that discovery began a new study of the entire Bible upon the method thus indicated. I sought for the germ of every truth, doctrine, revelation, and traced it patiently through the books. To illustrate: If we open our Bible at the first chapter and first verse, we read, 'In the beginning God—.' The Bible is, then, primarily, a revelation of God. And the revelation begins with a name—Elohim—God. The names of Deity are names of definite meaning. I ascertained these meanings. I took them up in the precise order of their occurrence, and lo! the higher critical notions of the way Pentateuch came to be, vanished into a mist of words. The order was precisely, scientifically, logically progressive from the simple to the complex."

The first reference to Christ in the Scriptures is found in Genesis 3:15. It is but a bare reference to a coming

Deliverer who was to be of the "seed of woman." But let us notice how this promise expands and becomes more definite as the years advance.

In Genesis 9:26, He was to be of the family of Shem;
In Genesis 12:3, 18:8, of the seed of Abraham;
In Genesis 17:19, of the line of Isaac;
In Genesis 28:4-14, through Jacob;
In Genesis 49:10, of the tribe of Judah;
In 2 Samuel 7:12-15, of the house of David;
In Micah 5:2, born in Bethlehem;
In Isaiah 7:14, born of a virgin.

This short epitome of Old Testament prophecy regarding the coming Christ reveals to us the necessity of a comprehensive study of the whole Bible as a ground work for further detailed study. There is no fear of reading it through consecutively too many times. Indeed no man can have anything like an adequate view of its great teachings who has not read it through many, many times. We receive some new vision of truth each time we peruse its pages. Said Mr. Moody:

"You cannot read the Bible as you do other books. I visited Mr. Prang's chromo establishment in Boston and saw the process of printing a picture of some public man. The first stone made hardly an impression on the paper. The second stone showed no sign of change. The third no sign. The fifth and sixth showed only outlines of a man's head. The tenth, the man's face, chin, nose and forehead appeared. The fifteenth and twentieth looked like a dim picture. The twenty-eighth impression stood forth as natural as life. It looked as though it would speak to you. So, carefully and prayerfully read the Word of God—read the same chapter again and again—and the twenty-eighth time Christ Jesus will shine forth."

One should become thoroughly acquainted with the order of events from Genesis to Revelation. The best way to study geography is to take a good look at the globe. It enables one to see the proportions of the sea and land, the main outlines of continents, and the relative sizes and positions of various countries. So we ought to get a Pisgah view of the Bible, and this ought to be done, not from an analysis, but from the reading of the Book itself. It will take considerable time, but in the long run this preliminary, rapid reading will prove serviceable. We have to deal with some sixty-six books by some forty different authors, ranging from about B. C. 1500 to A. D. 70. We have to study history, law, poetry, letters. We have to dive into the writings of kings, priests, princes, shepherds, fishermen. We need, therefore, to get a bird's-eye view of the whole in order to give to each book its due position. In spite of the variety of its style and contents we speedily find, as we read the whole Bible through, that the Book is indeed one.

The intercourse of Christ with His disciples after His resurrection seems to have been mainly devoted to showing them from Moses and all the prophets that His life, sufferings and death were the exact fulfillment of all that had been foretold. To use Scripture thus requires a method of study far more advanced than is necessary for the use of defence or inspiration; it requires the power of taking a bird's-eye view of Scripture as a whole, of discerning the main currents flowing through it from first to last, and especially of tracing clearly the great central current to which all the others tend and into which they finally empty themselves.

Evidently this was Christ's way of studying the Bible; He could lift it up and wield it as a whole. One sees this even in His mode of using single texts. He rarely quoted

a text without revealing in it some hidden meaning which no one had suspected before, but which shines clear to all eyes as soon as it has been pointed out. Some rare men in all ages have had this power. You occasionally hear a preacher who can quote a text so that it becomes transfigured, and shines in his argument like a gem. What gives this power? It comes when the mind can go down and down through the text till it reaches the great lake of light that lies beneath all the texts, and a jet from that fiery sea comes up and burns on the surface. We are too easily satisfied with enjoying isolated texts. The shock and stimulus which a single text can give is very valuable, but the whole Book can give a more powerful shock, if we read it from beginning to end and try to grasp its message as a whole. Such a course of study earnestly followed will bring us nearest to Christ's own method. It will inevitably land us in the great central current which runs through the whole of Scripture from first to last. What is this? It is nothing but Christ Himself. The whole stream and drift of the Old Testament moves straight to the cross of Christ. The whole of the New Testament is nothing but the portrait of Christ.

The Bible may also be compared to a circle, in describing which the divine hand begins in Paradise and ends there. In Genesis God dwells with men, and so He does in Revelation. In Genesis man is in Eden, with the river that watered the garden, and the trees yielding their pleasant fruits, and in Revelation man is in the garden of God once more, with this advantage that no serpent is there to beguile, and no forbidden fruit to allure. The Bible, then, is the story of man placed in Paradise, Paradise lost through sin, and the determinate purpose of God, though often thwarted, and for a long time postponed, but finally successful, to regain the lost Paradise for man.

Nothing but a comprehensive view of the whole Bible can give us anything like an adequate conception of this wonderful panorama of the history of redemption.

A very interesting view of the Bible as a whole is to look at it as a history of man's failures and fresh starts, and God's repeated mercies and patience.

This can be represented in diagram, thus:

THE PROBATION OF THE HUMAN RACE THROUGH REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

| Representative men. | The testing. | The results. | The effects. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Adam..... | Gen. 2:16-17. | Failure—Gen. 3:6-11. | Gen. 3:23-24, Flood Gen. 6, 7. |
| Noah..... | Gen. 9:1, 9-17. | Failure—Gen. 9:21. | Dispersion, Confusion, Babel, Gen. 11. |
| Abraham..... (Israel) | Gen. 12:1-3. | Failure Matt. 23:37-9. | Cast off, Jerusalem trodden down, Luke 21:24. |
| Christ..... | Matt 4:1-10. | Success—Matt. 3:17, 17:5. | A Godly seed, Isa. 53:11; Eph. 2:6, 7; Phil 2:9. |

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS.

*Learn to handle your Bible.*

Every one should seek facility in quick reference to books, chapters, and verses. A few simple hints will be given for learners.

Take your teacher's Bible, and separate the Bible text from the appended helps by a marker. Hold the leaves

containing the text firmly with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand. With the finger of the right hand halve the book, dividing it as nearly in the center as possible. Where will you find yourself? Near the middle of the Psalms. Where is the first quarter of the book? In the early chapters of 1 Samuel. Where is the third quarter? Near the end of the Old Testament.

Next practice finding the various books of the Bible with the least possible fumbling of the leaves. Some Bibles have a patent index in the margin, by which you can open exactly at the book. Some students find this an advantage, others say they do not care for it; an expert does not find it necessary.

*Learn the books of the Bible.*

Commit their names to memory. That requires a little time.

Take the general divisions for convenience; the Pentateuch, historical, poetical, and prophetical books of the Old Testament. Remembering the order in which the first vowels come may possibly aid in recalling the double books, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles—a, i, and o. The minor prophets can be mastered by learning this memory help formed by combining the first two letters of each in order:

Ho, Jo, Am.
Ob, Jo, Mi, Na.
Ha, Ze, Ha, Ze, Ma.

In the New Testament the four epistles coming after Corinthians are often perplexing. Here again remember that they come in the order of the first vowels: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians—a, e, i, o. Remember that Paul's epistles are all grouped together, and the per-

sonal ones to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon come after the more general ones to churches. After the epistle to the Hebrews, all the epistles by other writers than Paul are grouped. Observe here again that they come in order of the first vowels, James, Peter, John, Jude—a, e, o, u. As to the number of the epistles by each, note one epistle by James, two by Peter, three by John, and one by Jude.

*Locate the great passages of the Bible.*

Where may I find the Ten Commandments? Exodus 20. And where else? Deuteronomy 5. The longest chapter in the Bible? Psalm 119. The shortest? Psalm 117. The Lord's prayer? Matthew 6. The New Testament Psalm of love? 1 Corinthians 13. The great roll of the heroes of faith? Hebrews 11. Paul's greatest argument for the resurrection? 1 Corinthians 15.

The location of many other important incidents and doctrinal passages should be learned in this way.

No thorough student will be satisfied until he can give a general idea of the contents of every book, and (in some books) the contents of every chapter.

SCRIPTURAL FACTS.

Books in the Old Testament, 39; books in the New Testament, 27; total, 66.

Chapters in the Old Testament, 929; chapters in the New Testament, 260; total, 1,189.

Verses in the Old Testament, 23,214; verses in the New Testament, 7,959; total, 31,173.

Words in the Old Testament, 592,439; words in the New Testament, 181,253; total, 773,692.

Letters in the Old Testament, 2,728,110; letters in the New Testament, 838,380; total, 3,566,490 letters in the Bible.

The middle chapter in the Bible, and the shortest one, is Psalm 117; the middle verse is Psalm 118:8.

The middle book of the Old Testament is Proverbs; the middle chapter is Job 29; the middle verse, 2 Chronicles 20:17; the shortest verse is 1 Chronicles 1:25.

The middle book of the New Testament is 2 Thessalonians; middle verse, Acts 17:17; the shortest verse, John 11:35.

Ezra 7:21 has all the letters of the alphabet except j.

The word Jehovah or Lord occurs 6,855 times.

The name Jerusalem occurs over 800 times.

The five books of Moses (Pentateuch) can be read in eighteen hours; the four Gospels and the Acts in thirteen hours; the whole of the Old Testament in seventy-four hours; and New Testament in twenty hours. Total time in which the Bible can be read, ninety-eight hours, or four days and two hours.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Show the importance and value of familiarity with the Bible as a whole.

2. Give an illustration to show the progress of revelation.

3. Give the steps in the probation of the human race through representative men, with the results and effects of each.

4. Name the minor prophets in order.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE BY BOOKS.

The testimony of two of the leading Bible teachers of this country will serve as a fitting introduction to this chapter, indicating the benefits to be derived from Bible study by books.

"For the first half of my ministry," says James M. Gray, D. D., of Boston, "I did not know my English Bible as I should, the effect of which was seen both in my own spiritual life and the character of my preaching. My heart was greatly burdened in prayer about it for more than a year, when God answered me through the lips of a Christian layman, whom I met at a Christian convention in an eastern state. His peace and joy in Christ I so much coveted as to ask him how he had obtained the blessing. He told me that it came to him through reading the epistle to the Ephesians. I asked him how he had read it.

" 'I was going to spend the Sabbath with my family in the country,' said he, 'and I carried with me a pocket copy of the epistle. In the afternoon I lay down under a tree and read it through at a single reading. My interest being awakened, I read it through again in the same way, and again, and again, as many as twelve or fifteen times; and when I arose to go into the house I was not only in possession of Ephesians, but Ephesians was in possession of me.'

"I at once began the application of this simple principle to the whole Bible practically, beginning at Genesis. I did

not read the Bible in course merely, but kept at each book in its chronological order until it was thus mastered before I began work in the next. I cannot tell the effect upon me—strengthening my faith in the infallibility of the Bible, enlarging my mental vision, deepening my spiritual life, and lightening the burdens of my ministry.

"There was some theological students under my care at this time, upon whom I began experimenting in this method of Bible study with similar blessed results. Then I was led of God to introduce it in the Moody Bible Institute and other training schools, including the theological seminary of my own church. Finally the popular evening Bible classes came into being, both east and west, numbering in several cases as many as a thousand members each.

"The method has come to be known as the synthetic study of the Bible, which means the study of the Bible *as a whole,* and each book of the Bible *as a whole,* and as seen in its relation to the other books.

"Begin to study the Bible where God began to write it, at Genesis. The rules of procedure are as follows:

"First read it *continuously, i. e.,* without observing its divisions into chapters and verses.

"Second, read it *repeatedly,* until you have the consciousness of its possession in outline.

Third, read it *independently, i. e.,* without the aid at first of any commentary or other Bible help.

"Fourth, read it *prayerfully,* in reliance upon the Holy Spirit who wrote it to enlighten its pages to your understanding.

"The observance of these simple rules has never failed to produce the desired blessing."

Rev. C. I. Scofield, D. D., testifies to the same effect:

"I study the books of the Bible. The Bible was built up book-wise. It is the law of its structure. The first rule

of any kind of objective study is to obey the law of the structure. A crystal is not built like an apple, nor an apple like an orange, nor an orange like a tree. So the Bible, being one book made up of many books, is to be studied book by book. That is the analytic way. And within the books themselves are lines of cleavage which yield a secondary analysis into sections; and these again fall into parts. The ideas of the books are thus arranged by the Spirit, and we do well to observe that arrangement."

The marked excellence of this plan is clearly evident from the testimony of these men who are specialists in their lines of teaching. In fact, in no other way can the contents of Scripture be so firmly and so lucidly fixed in the mind. Each book needs to be studied by itself as a book. The Scriptures were written by many different individuals, in many different ways, and in many different ages. The writers each had a different purpose in view, and wrote to meet a certain and definite need. It may be safely said that many, many verses in the Bible cannot be understood without a definite knowledge of the whole book in which they are found.

After the student has patiently, watchfully, and prayerfully read the whole Bible through, and caught a bird's eye view, and at least a faint idea of the general tenor of its contents, then let him single out a book that he desires to study, and for some time make that his exclusive study.

### HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE BY BOOKS.

Let us suppose that we have chosen the book of Genesis for our study. And there is surely something appropriate in our choice, for Genesis is the portal through which we enter into the magnificent temple of Revelation. How shall we now proceed to the study and the mastery of

its contents? How shall we apply the rules given on the preceding pages?

**1. Read the book through from beginning to end, four or five times.**

This is necessary in order that the student may catch the drift of the writer's argument, get into sympathy with his spirit, secure a knowledge of the message he intended to convey to the people to whom it was written, and what message it has for us to-day.

Genesis can be read through at one sitting in about two hours.

In reading it the first time make no attempt to remember any of the contents. The second time try to get a general idea as to its drift. The third time note the divisions according to paragraphs. The Revised Version is especially fitted for this purpose.

**2. Divide the book into sections, and make an outline of its contents.**

The student will now be in a position to form some definite idea as to the divisions of Genesis. It divides easily into two main divisions, viz.:

(a.) The Early History of Mankind, chapters 1-11.

(b.) The History of Israel's immediate ancestors, the patriarchs, chapters 12-50.

The main divisions having been secured, now try to subdivide the book.

Under (a.) The Early History of Mankind, you will find:

1. The creation of man, chapters 1-2.
2. The testing and fall of man, chapter 3.
3. The first increase of the human family, chapter 4.
4. The roll of names, or genealogy, of the patriarchs, chapter 5.

5. The increasing sin of man; God's punishment of man after patient forbearance; the destruction of the race (save Noah and his family) by the waters of the flood, chapters 6-8.

6. The race given a new start in Noah, chapter 9.

7. Another genealogical table, showing the growth of the race through Noah and his family, chapter 10.

8. The dispersion of the race because of their defying God; the confusion of tongues; the race scattering to inhabit different parts of the globe, chapter 11.

Such an outline as this can be gathered from the thoughtful reading of the book itself, without any reference to other works.

Under (b) The History of Israel's immediate ancestors, the patriarchs, you will find:

1. The call, journeyings, life and death of Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, chapters 12-25.

2. The life of Isaac, chapters 21-28.

3. The life of Jacob, chapters 28-36.

4. The life of Joseph, chapters 37-50.

These sections can be further subdivided according to the same general plan.

It will be noted in the study of Genesis that the second division is the most important of the two. Throughout the Scriptures other nations and peoples are introduced only because of their connection in some way with the chosen people of God.

Having now become possessed of the structure of Genesis, we may proceed to more detailed examination of its contents.

**3. The book may now be studied topically.** (See chapter VII, part II.)

For instance, "Genesis" means "beginning," "origin." A very interesting study therefore is to go through the book with the purpose of finding out the "beginnings" or "origins" of things. With a sheet of paper and a pencil we begin this task, and we note:

The origin of the world (ch. 1); of man and woman (ch. 1:26; 2:25); of the Sabbath (ch. 2:1-3); marriage (ch. 2:18); of sin (ch. 3); of promises (ch. 3:15); of prophecy (ch. 3:15); of sacrifice (ch. 4:3); of nations (ch. 11); of Israel (ch. 12); etc.

**4. The Biographies of Genesis might then well be studied.**

(See Chapter IX, Part II.)

Genesis abounds in biography. Men appear on the scene here whose lives and experiences are interwoven in all the pages that follow. Among the leading characters are:

Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Joseph.

**5. Study the great Doctrines of Genesis.** (See chapter VII, part II.)

Take up such doctrines as sin, redemption, sacrifice, faith, repentance, judgment, God, satan, man, angels. Classify them in their proper order, and you will have the beginnings of a system of divinity that is purely Biblical.

**6. After having studied the text itself in such a thorough manner, the student may then consult good works on Genesis for information on points of Introduction, as to Authorship, Date, etc.**

Many books of the Bible answer these questions themselves. However, after having studied a book so thor-

oughly, it is fitting to find out what noted writers have to say on the same subject.

"I check and verify my results by study of the books of spiritually-minded men of learning and depth," says Dr. Scofield. "It is foolish to depend only upon these sources, ignoring the immediate teaching of the Spirit, for at last we only really know what we have been taught of God. But it is equally foolish and conceited to take no account of what God the Spirit has taught the wise and humble men, who, in Augustine's phrases, 'have not been light of heart.'"

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

The epistle to the Ephesians is recognized as the deepest and most profound book in the Bible. It will amply repay us, therefore, to attempt an analytical study of it.

1. Begin by reading the epistle through three times at one sitting, making no special effort to do anything more then catch the author's spirit and the drift of his argument.

2. Read the book through the fourth time carefully and thoughtfully for the purpose of finding out and classifying questions of introduction, such as Who wrote the book? Why was it written? What was the character of the people to whom it was written? When was it written?

Have by your side as many sheets of paper as there are questions on introduction. Write a headline on each sheet, viz.: On sheet 1—The author: who wrote the book; sheet 2—The persons addressed: to whom written; sheet 3—When written; sheet 4—Why written?

Now begin to read the text carefully, prayerfully, and thoughtfully. Chapter 1, verse 1 gives us two points—the author of the book, and the persons addressed. Now write down on sheet 1, "Paul, 1:1"; and on sheet 2, write "the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, 1:1." Reading on further you find something else to write on sheet 2. The persons addressed were "Gentiles, 2:11; 3:1,6,8; 4:17"; "formerly living in lust, 2:2,3"; "formerly in darkness, 4:18; 5:8."

Read through the epistle with these questions in mind, and whenever an answer occurs, write it down on its respective sheet, giving the words of the text, and the exact reference.

The final result will be somewhat as follows:

*Sheet 1.*

**The Writer.**

Paul, 1:1; 3:1; 4:1; 6:20.

*Sheet 2.*

**The Persons addressed —to whom written?**

The saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, 1:1.

Gentiles, 2:11; 3:1,6,8; 4:17;

Formerly lived in lust, 2:2, 3;

Formerly live in great darkness, 4:18; 5:8;

Now one with Christ, 2:1-6;

Made nigh to God with Christ, 2:13;

Fellow-heirs with the Jews of the blessings of the Gospel, 3:6;

Some were Christian slaves, 6:6-8;

Others were Christian slave holders, 6:9.

*Sheet 3.*

**The Time of writing—when written?**

When Paul was a prisoner at Rome, 3:1; 4:1; 6:20.

NOTE — This imprisonment was known as the first imprisonment, and lasted two years, A. D. 61-63. (See Acts 28.)

*Sheet 4.*

**The Purpose of writing—why written?**

In general, to give to the Ephesian church a clear knowledge of their position and standing in Christ.

That they might know the hope of their calling;

The power of God and His glory, 1:17-21; 3:20;

A warning not to go back again to their former low level of life, 2:1-3,11,12; 4:17-32; 5:1-13;

Exhortation to develop love in the heart (1) to Christ, (2) to each other, 3:18; 5:2;

A plea for harmony and unity between Jewish and Gentile Christians, 2:20-22; 4:3-16;

To set forth the true view of the various relationships of life, such as husband and wife, master and servant, chapters 5 and 6.

These illustrative sheets are by no means exhaustive. They simply show how to apply the method, which the student can enlarge upon individually.

3. The next thing to do will be to find out the general outline, division, or plan of the book.

This is comparatively easy with regard to the epistles of Paul. They usually fall into two main divisions, the doctrinal and the practical. Such is the general outline of Ephesians. Chapters 1-3 present the doctrinal part;

chapters 4-6, the practical part. In the first part the apostle dwells exhaustively upon the calling, standing, nature, and position of the Christian; in the second he admonishes them to walk worthy of so high a calling, and gives practical illustrations how to conduct themselves in the various walks of life.

I. Chapters 1-3—The choice and purpose of God with regard to the church, and the high calling of the Christian.

II. Chapters 4-6—The manner of the Christian's walk in view of the high calling of God.

(a.) As *a church* the walk must be one of *unity* (4:1-16).

(b.) As *individual Christians* the walk must be one of *morality;* a walk differing from that of the surrounding heathen nations (4:17—5:21).

(c.) As *a family* the walk must be one patterned after the family in heaven, characterized by love, obedience, and faithfulness (5:21—6:9).

(d.) As *Christian warriors* engaged in warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil, it must be a walk in which the Christian will always be armored with the complete panoply of God, (6:10-18).

In chapter 3:16-20 we have the assurance of the promised power to enable us to walk according to the high calling and the eternal purpose of our God.

4. Having thus worked out a general outline let us divide the two main questions into as many subdivisions as necessary. The result will be as follows:

1. **The Eternal Purpose of God with regard to the Church, and the High Calling of the Christian.** Chapters 1-3.

(1.) The apostolic greeting and salutation—1 :1-2.

(2.) The divine calling and choice—1 :3-14. This takes the form of

(a.) Thanksgiving for the spiritual blessings given to the whole church. These blessings are summed up as it were in a hymn of three stanzas, each ending with the same refrain, and representing the work of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost:

1. Predestined by the *Father,* who chose us to be sons, holy and without blemish, before the foundation of the world, *for the praise of the glory of His grace*—1 :4,5.

2. Given in *Christ* the Son, conveying redemption, forgiveness, knowledge of God's universal purpose for all creation, and inheritance among the saints, *to the praise of His glory*—1 :6-11.

3. Sealed, first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles, by the *Holy Spirit,* as an earnest of the complete redemption which lies in the future, *for the praise of His glory* —1 :12-14.

It is well to take especial notice of this hymn of praise, setting forth so beautifully and so completely the work of the Trinity. Paul evidently had the logical order of the work of redemption in his mind when he wrote this. Under this heading note further:

*1. The nature of that choice and calling.*

Eternal, before the foundation of the world—1 :4; 3 :9.

Wise and prudent—1 :8.

Free and gracious, according to the good pleasure of His will, the result of deliberate beneficient resolve—1 :5, 9, 11.

Originated in the good will of God Himself—1 :5,9,11.

Originated in the riches of His grace—1 :7.

*2. The purpose of that choice and calling.*

To the adoption of children—1 :5.
To acceptance in the Beloved—1 :6.
To holiness and blamelessness of life—1 :4.
To the magnifying of God's grace—1 :6.
To the complete exaltation of Christ—1 :10.

*3. What the Divine choice and calling includes.*

Redemption through the blood of Christ—1 :7.
Forgiveness of sins—1 :7.
Bestowment of all needed spiritual blessings—1 :3.
The knowledge of God's will, pleasure, and choice—1 :9.
Faith in Christ—1 :13.
That we might be "taken into the inheritance," become part of the Lord's portion, which is His people—1 :11.
The gift of the Holy Spirit as a seal of that inheritance—1 :13,14.
Final and complete redemption—1 :14.
Ultimate object—2 :7.

*4. The place of that choice and calling.*

Eternity—1 :4.
In Christ—1 :3; 3 :11.
In heavenly places—1 :3.

*5. The source of the knowledge of this choice and calling.*

(a.) The word of truth—the Gospel—1 :13.
The earnest of the Spirit in our hearts—1 :13,14.
(b.) Thanksgiving to God for the spiritual state of his readers, and a prayer to the Father of this glory that they might have a fuller knowledge of their high

calling, and of the purpose of God in their election to grace; and all this that it might lead to the acknowledging of Christ, to the realization of the hope of their Christian calling, to the knowledge of the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and to the personal experience of the exceeding great power of God—1:15-19.

The apostle here passes from the adoring view of the divine calling and choice to the prayer that its treasures of grace may be realized in the whole experience and life of the saints. That prayer covers three things—past, present, and future:

1. "The hope of their calling"—past.

"Hope" means realization.

"Calling" means effectuality, power to do.

2. "The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints"—future.

Observe how the apostle heaps up words to express the grandeur of this object: it is an inheritance; His inheritance; the glory of His inheritance; the riches of the glory of His inheritance. Paraphrased it would read, "What is the wealth of the glory of the new Israel in the eternal Canaan, as it will be revealed in the saints." The apostle seems to play upon this word "inheritance," regarding it now as the heritage of the saints in God, and again as His heritage in them. Both are true.

3. "The exceeding greatness of His power"—present.

We may see glorious visions, we may cherish high aspirations, and they may prove to be but the dream of vanity. The question of paramount importance is, What means exist for realizing them? What power is there that will enable me to be what God wants me to be? The answer in the apostle's words is, "The exceeding power of God." This is the power that we have to count on.

(c.) A fuller and more detailed account of the power of God, which is to enable the Christian to live according to the purpose of God (1:20-2:22).

The apostle says that it showed itself in a three-fold way:

1. As exerted upon Christ (1:20-23), granting Him resurrection from the dead—1:20; ascension to God's right hand—1:21; lordship over the whole universe, and headship over the church—1:22,23.

2. As exerted upon individuals (2:1-10), whether they be Jews or Gentiles, granting to them a similar three-fold gift, namely: Resurrection from spiritual death—2:1-5; ascension with Christ to a spiritual sphere, a sphere above this present world—2:6; the power to do good works and to manifest God's grace through the coming ages—2:6-10.

Note our condition by nature (v.1), the natural walk (v.2), the moving cause of that walk (v.2), the spirit of it (v.2), the result of it—wrath (v.3), compare this with v.4 and 10.

3. As exerted upon the whole of humanity (2:11-22).

The Gentiles, who formerly were alienated from God, have been brought nigh by the cross, so that now both Jews and Gentiles may have peace with God and with each other: they form one city, one family, one temple, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

The regeneration of the Gentiles and their being built into the spiritual temple of God is an example of the great power of God.

Note how the apostle reminds them of their natural condition. Gentiles had no claim whatever upon the grace of God (v.8). The remembrance of their former condition would enable them to appreciate their present standing.

*Seven-fold condition by nature.*
Gentiles in the flesh—v.11.
Without Christ—v.12.
Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel—v.12.
Strangers from the covenant of promise—v.12.
No hope—v.12.
Without God in the world—v.12.
Afar off—v.13.

*Seven-fold condition through grace:*
Made nigh—v.13.
Reconciled—v.16.
Recipients of peace—v.17.
Right of access to God—v.18.
Fellow-citizens with the saints—v. 19.
Members of the household of God—v.18.
Holy temples to the Lord—v.20,21.

(d.) Personal relations between the writer and his readers (3:1-13).

In this connection the apostle glorifies his office of ministry to the Gentiles. He desires that they should understand his ministry, committed to him by the revelation of God (v.2-4). This mystery revealed now as never before—that they should partake of the blessings of the Gospel. It was entrusted by special grace to him (v.5-7). Unworthy as he deemed himself, it was still his privilege to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles, yea, to all men (v.8,9), so that the manifold wisdom of God should be displayed in the heavenly world (v. 10), in fulfillment of God's eternal purpose in Christ (v.11), faith in whom gives liberty of approach to God (v.12). The apostle's tribulations should not be a discouragement, since they are an honor to those whose apostle he is (v.13).

(e.) Lastly, the main theme is resumed, and Paul prays for the indwelling of Christ, finishing the doctrinal part of the epistle with a doxology (3:14-21).

This takes the form of a prayer to the Father (v.14,15) for two gifts. First, spiritual strengthening (v.16); secondly, the indwelling of Christ (v.17). These gifts are to establish them in love and further them in knowledge (v.18), especially in the knowledge of the love of Christ, with a view to their final perfection (v.19).

The doxology ascribes to God, the mighty worker of all the wondrous blessings described in the epistle (v.20), glory in the church and in Christ forever (v.21).

**2. The Walk of the Christian in view of that High Calling.** Chapter 4-6.

The drop from the first part to the last part of this epistle seems like a drop from heaven to earth. The Lord teach us how to bring our experience into harmony with His choice and calling!

We have had our standing before God, now we come to our walk before the world.

1. *The walk of the church*—a walk of unity (4:1-16).

Note here that the church is one body, not because of peace among its members, but because God made it so, and hence unity should prevail. The church is an organism, not an organization.

*Some reasons for unity:*

We have here three arguments, and each argument has three clauses, with three parts.

First trio: (a) The church is one body, with one head, v.4; (b) one spirit permeates all the members; (c) one hope of calling.

Second trio: Unity shown by what makes men Christians, and members of the church (v.5). (a) One Lord the same Lord Jesus Christ is prince and possessor of all men equally; (b) one faith—one way of access to God, of being united with Christ, of sharing His benefits and redemption; all the blessings of the Gospel are appropriated in one way, by faith; (c) one baptism—no reference to mode, simply the act signifying open confession of faith in and allegiance to the Son of God.

Third trio: (v.6). The unity of God in His threefold relation to believers is the crowning argument for the unity of the church. (a) Over all—the same divine majesty recognized by the church; (b) through all—the same divine energy and activity working through all; (c) in all—the same divine indwelling in all.

Here we have the Trinity again—Spirit, v.4; Lord, v.5; Father, v.6. These three are *one.*

*This unity is not monotony.*

It recognizes a diversity of gifts, all of which, however, tend to promote unity (v. 7-13).

Every man has a gift (v.7).

He should find out what that gift is.

He should develop that gift to the utmost.

He will have to give an account of the use or abuse of that gift.

The purpose of these gifts is then brought out: for the setting in joint of the body, till the church comes to a full-grown man, her measure the fulness of the stature of Christ (v. 11-16).

2. *The walk of the individual*—one of morality (4:17-5:21).

In 4:17-19, the old Gentile life is described; in 4:20-24, the new life in Christ is described.

The exhortation to morality consists of two exhortations:

(a.) To put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man (4:17-24).

(b.) To exercise the virtues of the Christian life rather than the vices of the old life (4:25-5:21).

These virtues are:

(1.) Truthfulness, based on close union with one another (v.25).

(2.) Right use of anger, based upon the harm which the devil may do (v.26,27). Anger as the expression of mere wounded personality is wrong and sinful, for it means that self is in command; anger as the pure expression of repugnance to wrong in loyalty to God is not wrong. The apostle says, "Let anger be from the latter, never from the former motive."

(3.) Honest toil (v.28). Not only that which is legally allowed, but that which is beneficially good. The true object of work is to be benefactors, not merely to accumulate.

(4.) Pure conversation (v.29,30). Based on the desire to help those who hear. Aim to edify. Impure, idle, worthless conversation grieves the Holy Spirit, who dwells in you.

(5.) Gentleness, based on God's forgiveness of us (v.31,32).

(6.) Love, based on Christ's love and self-sacrifice (5:1-2).

(7.) Avoiding all impurity, covetousness, and idle talking, as being unworthy of consecrated Christians, and which will surely incur God's wrath and shut out of the kingdom of God (5:3-14).

(8.) Wise use of opportunities, based upon the evil of the times (5:16).

(9.) An intelligent understanding of God's will (5:17).

(10.) Fullness of spiritual joy and thankful praise to God (5:18-21).

3. *The walk of the family*—One of love, obedience and faithfulness (5:22-6:9).

The walk of the wife (5:22-24); husband (5:25-33); children (6:1-3); parents (6:4); servants (6:6-8); masters (6:9).

4. *As Christian warriors*, we must be armored with the complete panoply of God (6:10-18).

Description of the reality and seriousness of the conflict (6:10-13).

Description of the armor as complete (6:14-18).

Request for their prayers for himself (6:19-20).

Final salutation (6:23-24).

The student may then classify the doctrines found in the epistle.

Use separate sheets of paper with appropriate heading, such as: What the epistle teaches concerning God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost; duties to God, man, self; God's calling and choice; His purposes for the believer; sin; temptation; atonement; justification; sanctification; future rewards and punishments.

These are but a few of the many topics that may be gathered out of this wonderful mine of truth—Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

### HINTS FOR THE STUDY OF THE GOSPELS.

*1. Study them by means of a harmony.*

Make a harmony yourself. Buy a New Testament for clipping purposes, and paste the sections as they are clipped in their chronological order in a blank book. This will yield a wonderful knowledge of the contents of the Gospel history and order of events of Christ's life.

Use the Gospel by Mark as the basis of your harmony. It is recognized generally as being the most chronological in its arrangement.

*2. Study and compare the different accounts of the same event, parable, miracle or discourse by the various evangelists.*

For example, the feeding of the five thousand, Matt. 14, Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6; the entry into Jerusalem, Matt. 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 12; the crucifixion, Matt. 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19; the resurrection, Matt. 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20.

*3. Study the chronology and geography of each event.*

Look it up and locate it on the map. Have a large map in your room or study for this purpose.

*4. Read in connection with the Gospels a good life of Christ.*

There are many good works on the life of Christ; Stalker, Farrar, Geikie, and Edersheim are the principal

writers on this subject. Edersheim's is exceedingly valuable because it is presented from the standpoint of a Christian Jew.

5. *Study special subjects carefully.*

Such as the sermon on the mount, the parables, miracles, the last discourses as found in John 13-17.

6. *Never neglect questions of introduction.*

Who wrote the book? To whom written? Why? When? Where?

HINTS FOR THE STUDY OF THE EPISTLES.

1. *Study the life of the author as found in the book of Acts.*

Become thoroughly familiar with the leading events of his life, his call or conversion, his preaching tours, etc.

2. *Study the history of the church or individual to whom the epistle is written, as found in the book of Acts.*

Thus the planting of the church at Ephesus is recorded in Acts 18-20; at Philippi, Acts 16. This study gives a deep insight into the relations that existed between the apostle and the church or individual addressed.

3. *Read some biography of the author.*

4. *Study the epistles in the order in which they were written.*

James is the earliest of the New Testament books, although it is placed near the end of the volume in our English Bible.

*5. Study the epistles according to their doctrinal arrangement.*

Taking Paul's letters, for example, as follows:

1. Eschatological—1 and 2 Thessalonians.
2. Anti-Judaic—1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans.
3. Personal and Christological—Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Hebrews.
4. Pastoral—1 and 2 Timothy, Titus.

# CHAPTER VI.

## THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE BY CHAPTERS.

Great prominence is being given, in some places, to this method of Bible study. It has much to warrant such attention. It is unquestionably an exceedingly profitable way of getting a grasp of Scripture truth. Some objections have been made that might seem somewhat to disparage Chapter study, such, for example, as the unfortunate divisions of some chapters, e. g., the separation between Hosea 5 and 6, and the still more unfortunate division between Daniel 10 and 11, whereby a separation is made between one sentence and another uttered by the same speaker. But these are so few that on the whole this method is a safe and profitable one. Indeed, the writer cannot begin to measure the amount of pleasure and profit in the study of the Bible he has derived from it.

### CHAPTER SUMMARY.

As pursued at the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, Chapter Summary consists in answering in writing the four following questions upon every chapter:

(1) What is the Principal Subject?
(2) What is the Leading Lesson?
(3) What is the Best Verse?
(4) Who are the Prominent Persons?

By the *Principal Subject* is meant that subject around which the material of the chapter, taken as a whole, most

naturally and clearly groups itself. It may be contracted into a "chapter name," if desired, and memorized.

By the *Leading Lesson* is not necessarily meant the best personal lesson in the chapter, but the great practical or doctrinal truth which most nearly states the teaching of the chapter as a whole. It will require more and better thought and study to find the Leading Lesson than to find the best personal lesson. The mind will also be made familiar with a wider circle of truth. It should be written out in sentence form, not as a mere clause.

The *Best Verse* is that which to the individual student appears most precious, and which would be kept if all others in the chapter had to be given up. Sometimes it is the *Key Verse.* Mark it in your Bible with red ink, and memorize it, if possible.

The *Prominent Persons* are those who appear prominently in the chapter—not including those who are merely mentioned. If the student is not familiar with these, their history should be followed up with concordance and Bible dictionary.

Sample Chapter summaries are given as follows:

*Genesis I.*

*Principal Subject:* The Creation.

*Leading Lesson:* The eternal God is creator and preserver of all things.

*Best Verse:* 27.

*Prominent Persons:* God, the Word of God, the Spirit of God, man (male and female).

*Genesis VII.*

*Principal Subject:* The Flood.

*Leading Lesson:* The harvest of sin is certain destruction, but God provides a way of escape for the righteous.
*Best Verse:* 1.
*Prominent Persons:* Jehovah, Noah, Shem, Ham, Japeth, and their wives.

The claim is made from experience that Chapter Summary has merits and advantages that make it unusually happy and helpful for the average man or woman who wants to master the English Bible.

It comprises the technical (or mentally educative) with the devotional in a most helpful way. It is simple enough for the beginner and the young convert, yet it affords ample opportunity for the deepest and most far-reaching thought and investigation by the mature saint and student.

It takes the student right to the Bible itself—not to text-books or commentaries, however good.

It makes him an independent investigator and discoverer, looking only to the Holy Spirit as his teacher and guide—John 16:13.

It leads him through the Bible systematically, developing regularity in study and conduct.

It cultivates definiteness of thought and character, and clearness and force of expression.

It feeds his soul with fresh manna in God's appointed way.

It induces practical Christian living by leading him to apply God's Word to daily life.

It is practical. The student gets down to business without delay.

It is easily adaptable to the needs of individuals, classes or churches.

It is inexpensive, necessitating no outfit but a Bible, pencil and notebook.

It is convenient. It can be pursued anywhere and at odd moments—on the train, during lunch hour, etc. Hence it is much used by missionaries and others who have to travel.

It is fruitful in life and experience, affording great personal blessing and also preparation for service and witnessing.

### CHAPTER ANALYSIS.

In addition to this method of Chapter Summary which gives a general survey and acquaintance with the chapter, a more analytic method is suggested.

For example, let us

### TAKE THE 17TH CHAPTER OF JOHN—THE PRAYER OF CHRIST.

This chapter, at least, is complete in itself. How then shall we proceed to study it analytically?

1. Read it through many times until it becomes a part of yourself; until you catch the spirit of the Master.

2. Divide the chapter into sections; make an outline of it. It falls into three main divisions:

I. The prayer of Christ for Himself—v. 1-5.

II. The prayer of Christ for His apostles—v. 6-19.

III. The prayer of Christ for the church of the future —v. 20-26.

3. Make subdivisions under the main headings.

Under I.—The prayer of Christ for Himself—we have the request of Christ for personal glorification that He may

(a) glorify the Father (v.1).

(b) endure the Cross, "the hour" (v.1).

(c) bless humanity by the bestowal of eternal life (v. 2).

(d) finish the work appointed by the Father (v. 4).

Under II—The prayer for the apostles—we have Christ

(a) describing His relation to them and their attitude towards Him, and the message the Father had given Him (v.6).

(b) praying for their unity with the Father, the Son, and each other (v.11).

(c) praying that the Father would keep them, while they remained in the world, from the power of the evil one (v.11,15,16).

(d) praying for their sanctification, i. e., that they might be consecrated to the work of the ministry, as He had been (v.17-19).

Under III—The prayer for the church of the future—we have Christ praying.

(a.) for its unity (v.21-23).

(b.) for its power in testimony before the world (v.21,23).

(c.) that the whole church may be gathered ultimately with Him in eternal glory (v.24-26).

4. Read the chapter again carefully, and classify, on separate sheets of paper, the doctrinal teachings; what it teaches about God, Christ, the believer, the world, etc. The result of such study will be as follows:

**God.**

*(a.) What He is.*

His nature—divine (v. 1), omnipotent (v. 2), omnipresent (v. 23), righteous (v. 25).

His name—Father (v.1,5,21,24), only true God (v.3). Holy Father (v.11), righteous Father (v.25).

(*b.*) *What He does.*

With respect to Christ:

Loved Him before the foundation of the world (v.24), sends Him to the world (v.3,8,18,21,23,25), dwells in Him (v.23), gives Him all power (v.2), gives believers to Him (v.3,6,8, etc.), glorifies Him (v., 22,24).

With respect to believers:

Gives them to Christ (v.3,6,8, etc.), loves them as He loves Christ (v.23,26), dwells in them (v.23,26), keeps them (v.11,12,15), sanctifies them (v.17), makes them one with Himself (v.7,21), gives them eternal life by knowing Him (v.3).

**Jesus Christ.**

(*a.*) *What He is.*

His nature—divine—Son (v. 1), omnipotent v. 2), omnipresent (v. 23), equal with God (v. 3,10,11,12,21), preexistent (v.5.24); human—with human body (v.1), a man (v.1,4,11,12), dependent upon the Father (v.7,8).

His names—Jesus (v.1), Son (v.1), Christ (v.3).

(*b.*) *What He does.*

With respect to God:

Glorifies God (v.1,3), reveals God (v.6,26), knows God intimately (v.25), delivers God's Word (v.8,14), finishes the work God gave Him to do (v.4), speaks God's words (v.8).

With respect to believers:

They are His (v.10), gives eternal life to them (v.2), manifests God to them (v.6,25,26), prays for them (v.9, 20), dwells in them (v.21,23), keeps them (v.12), intercedes for them (v.8,9), sanctifies Himself as their example (v.19), longs for them in glory (v.24).

**The Believer.**

(*a.*) *His relationship to God.*

Belongs to God (v.6,8,9,10,24), indwelt by God (v.23, 26), kept by God (v.11,12,15), knows God (v.3,25), receives His Word (v.8), keeps His word (v.6), loved by God (v. 23,26), God glorified in them (v. 10).

(*b.*) *His relationship to Christ.*

Given to Christ by God (v.2,6,8, etc.), is His (v.9,10), knows Christ (v.3), recognizes the divine origin of Christ (v.8), recognizes the divine origin of His teaching (v.7), one with Christ (v.21,22), shares in His glory (v.22), object of His prayer (v. 9,17), kept by His power (v. 15), must follow His example in sanctification (v. 19), has same errand as Christ (v. 18), will be with Him in glory (v. 24), one with Christ (v. 21,22).

(*c.*) *His relationship to the world.*

In, not of (v.11,14,15,16), hated by (v.14), must preach to (v.20,21), should be victorious over (v.15), should show unity before (v.21,23), should lead it to Christ through testimony (v.23).

(*d.*) *His relationship to other believers.*

Love them with the same love as Christ (v. 26), be one with them (v.11,21,22).

**The World.**

Knows not the Father (v.25), hates Christ (v.14), hates believers (v.14), not included in Christ's intercessory prayer (v.9), Christ came to save it (v.18), believers sent to lead it to God (v.18), will be led to believe in Jesus Christ as the God-sent Saviour by the disciples' testimony v.20,21), will believe when believers are united (v.21,23).

**Prayer.**

Posture (v.1); object—God's glory and the salvation of men; nature—intercessory, unselfish, prophetic; subjects —Christ (v.1), the apostles (v.9), disciples of all ages (v.20), not for the world (v.9).

**The Word of God.**

Spoken by Christ (v.8), given to the disciples by Christ (v.8,14), received by believers (v.8), believed (v. 8), kept (v.6), is truth (v.17), the means of sanctification (v.17), the means of salvation (v.20).

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE BY TOPICS.

By the topical study of the Bible is meant the selection of a definite subject for study and the tracing of that subject through the whole Bible.

This was the method of Bible study pursued by the late Dwight L. Moody. I have before me a book of his sermons in which this method of Bible study is illustrated. In this volume is a sermon on "The Blood." It is nothing more or less than a topical study on that subject.

He takes the word "blood," as found in the book of Genesis, traces the word, its meaning and usage, through the historical and prophetical books, in fact through almost every book in the Old Testament. Then he takes it up as used in the New Testament, from Matthew to Revelation, sets forth its different meanings, and teaches the great lessons to be derived from them.

"Take repentance," for example, said Mr. Moody once. "Read up everything you can find about repentance. Take time. Suppose you spend a month; you couldn't spend it better. Get people's idea about repentance, and then see what the Bible says about it. Dozens of people say they have repented who don't know what repentance is. They think they have got to have some strange kind of feeling. A man I used to meet up in Vermont would say to me every time I spoke to him:

"'Mr. Moody, it hasn't struck me yet. A neighbor of mine has been converted, and he has been a changed man since; but it hasn't struck me.'

"Lots of people think repentance is going to strike them like lightning. Now repentance doesn't come in that way. See what Bible repentance is. It isn't fear, it isn't feeling."

Without question this is indeed an exceedingly profitable method of Bible study, especially so for beginners. It at once establishes them in the great and deep truths of the Christian life. *Topical Text Books* can be bought at a very nominal price, and a copy should be in the possession of every student of Scripture. Possibly no other method of study is as interesting to Christians in general as the Topical method. A specimen study from a *Topical Text Book* is as follows:

**Meekness.**

Christ set an example of—Psalms 45:4; Is. 53:7; Matt. 11:29; Matt. 21:5; 2 Cor. 10:1; 1 Peter 2:21-23.
His teaching—Matt. 5:38-45.
A fruit of the Spirit—Gal. 5:22,23.

*Saints should:*
Seek—Zeph. 2:3.
Put on—Col. 3:12,13.
Receive the Word of God with—James 1:21.
Exhibit, in conduct, etc.—James 3:13.
Answer for their hope with—1 Peter 3:15.
Show, to all men—Titus 3:2.
Restore the erring with—Gal. 6:1.
Precious in the sight of God—1 Peter 3:4.

*Ministers should:*
Follow after—1 Tim. 6:11.
Instruct opposers with—2 Tim. 2:24,25.

Urge on their people—Titus 3:1,2.
A characteristic of wisdom—James 3:17.
Necessary to a Christian walk—Eph. 4:1,2; 1 Cor. 6:7.

*They who are gifted with:*

Are preserved—Psalms 76:9.
Are exalted—Psalms 147:6; Matt. 23:12.
Are guided and taught—Psalms 25:9.
Are richly provided for—Psalms 22:26.
Are beautified with salvation—Psalms 149:4.
Increase their joy—Is. 29:19.
Shall inherit the earth—Psalms 37:11.
The Gospel to be preached to those who possess—Is. 61:1.
Blessedness of—Matt. 5:5.
Exemplified—*Moses,* Num. 12:3; *David,* 1 Sam. 30:6; 2 Sam. 16:9-12; *Paul,* 1 Cor. 4:12; 1 Thess. 2:7.

I know a pastor who has been quite successful in getting his people to study the Bible. He devoted one evening of each week to the study of the Scriptures. This interest in Bible study among his members was awakened by means of the Topical method to some extent. Feeling that his people were not interested enough in the Bible, he arranged with a publishing house to bring up to the church on the evening of Bible study about fifty *Topical Text Books.* This was done, with the result that the whole number, and more, were sold. This was the beginning of Bible study interest in his church, an interest which is still increasing.

Following are some subjects fitted for this kind of study: Faith, Confession, Restitution, Repentance, Love, Holiness, Giving, The Second Coming of Christ, Sin, etc.

I have been greatly helped by a study of the New Testament teaching on the subject of prayer, taking up first,

"The example of Christ as a Man of Prayer"; second, "A Study of the Prayers of Christ"—these two covering the Gospels; third, "Prayer in the Apostolic church as shown in Acts"; fourth, "The Teaching of the Epistles regarding Prayer," and fifth, "The Prayers of the Epistles," including in this the ascriptions, invocations, and benedictions, and also the prayer-life of Paul, as it is so richly revealed. Any one can study in this way the Bible teaching about sin, love, redemption, salvation, heaven, and purity.

Following is a topical study on Christ's teaching on "Prayer:"

**Christ's teaching on Prayer.**

I. *To Whom He prayed.*—Object.

1. To the *"Father"*—Matt. 6:6,9; 11:26; 26:39,42,53; John 11:41.
2. To the *"Father in Heaven"*—Matt. 7:11.
3. To the *"Lord of Heaven and Earth"*—Matt. 11:25.
4. To the *"Lord of the Harvest"*—Matt. 9:38.
5. To *God*—Matt. 27:46.

II. *For Whom He prayed.*—Subject.

1. *For His apostles*—John 16:26; 17:8-16.

(a.) For Peter especially—Luke 22:32.

(b.) For all the apostles that they might (1) be in union with the Father and Son; (2) be kept from the evil of the world; (3) be sanctified or separated unto the great work of preaching—John 17:6-19; (4) that they might receive the Holy Ghost—John 16:26.

2. *For believers of all time*—John 17.

(a.) For their unity with the God-head and each other —17:21-23.

(b.) For their joy—17:20-26.
(c.) For their ultimate salvation in glory—17:20-26.
3. *For His enemies*—Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:28; 23:34.

III. *For what He prayed.*

1. Hallowing of God's name—Matt. 6:9.
2. Coming of God's kingdom—Matt. 6:10.
3. God's will to be done on earth—Matt. 6:10.
4. For our daily bread—Matt. 6:11.
5. Forgiveness of sins—Matt. 6:12.
6. Deliverance from temptation—Matt. 6:13; Mark 14:38; Luke 22:40-46.
7. Increase of faith—Matt. 17:21.
8. For power to do work of God—Matt. 17:21; Mark 9:29; Luke 24:49.
9. For preparation for Christ's coming—Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36.
10. For good things—the Holy Ghost—Luke 11:13; Matt. 7:11.
11. For ministers to be sent to the harvest—Matt. 9:38.
12. Benefit of others—John 12:29,30

IV. *When He prayed.*

1. At time of baptism—Luke 3:21.
2. In great crises of life—Matt. 26:36,39; Mark 6:46; Luke 5:16; 6:12.
3. In times of despair—Matt. 27:46.
4. In times of persecution—Matt. 24:20; Mark 13:18.
5. In times of success—John 6:15.
6. In times of glorification—Luke 9:28,29.
7. Early in the morning—Mark 1:35.
8. During the day—Matt. 11:25.

9. At night, all night—Luke 6:12; 21:37.
10. Always—Luke 18:1; 21:36.

V. *Where He prayed.*

1. In the temple—Luke 18:9.
2. In the wilderness—Luke 5:16.
3. In the mountain—Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46; John 6:15; 8:1.
4. In the garden—Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32.
5. At the grave—John 11:41.
6. In a solitary place—Mark 1:35.
7. In the private closet—alone—Matt. 6:6; 14:23; Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:18.
8. On the cross—Matt. 27:46.

VI. *Characteristics of true prayer.*

1. Acknowledgment of God's sovereignty—Matt. 6:13.
2. Thanksgiving—Matt. 11:25; Luke 10:21; John 11:41.
3. Seeking of God's glory—Matt. 26:39,42; John 17:1.
4. Sincere, unostentatious—Matt. 6.
5. Not vain, expressing true needs—Matt. 6:7.
6. Submission to the will of God—Matt. 11:26; 26:39, 42; Mark 14:32-36; Luke 22:42.
7. Earnestness—Matt. 26:39; Mark 14:36.
8. Importunity—Luke 11:8; 18:1.
9. Faith that God will hear and answer—Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:24.
10. Confession of sin—Luke 18:13; Matt. 6.
11. Humility—Luke 18:14.
12. Agony—Luke 22:44.
13. Fasting—Matt. 17:21; Mark 9:29.

14. Watching—Matt. 26:41; Mark 9:29.
15. Forgiveness and reconciliation—Matt. 5:24.
16. Abiding in Christ—John 15:7.

While the *Topical Text Book* sets forth the topics in a logical order, it does not arrange them in the order of the books of the Bible. There is another book which traces topics according to the order of the books of the Bible, thus giving a view of their progressive development. In treating the subject of Repentance, for example, it begins with Genesis, and quotes from each book of the Bible in order on that theme. In this way the student can get an idea as to the progressive nature of the revelation that God has given on that subject. Such a book is *The Bible Text Cyclopedia,* by Inglis.

### ANOTHER METHOD OF TOPICAL STUDY.

In addition to the study of Scripture themes by means of a *Topical Text-Book* great profit may be derived from their study by means of a Concordance.

Suppose we desire to study the topic of Faith, how shall we proceed? In the following manner:

Take your Concordance, and open it to the word "Faith." Having done this, prepare several sheets of paper with one of the following questions written on each sheet: What? How? When? Where? Whom? meaning, What is faith? How is it to be obtained? Why is it necessary? etc.

As you glance down the column in the Concordance, the first appropriate passage you note is that found in Habakkuk 2:4: "The just shall live by his faith." This passage,—together with Romans 1:17, which is a quotation of it,—should be written upon the sheet headed "Why?" Then put under the first passage on the same sheet Mat-

thew 9:29, and Hebrews 11:9—"According to your faith so be it unto you"—showing that it is necessary to have faith in order to receive the blessings of God.

On the sheet marked "Whom?" place the objects of faith. Here we may write Mark 11:22—"Have faith in God"; Romans 3:25—"faith in His blood"; 1 Thessalonians 1:8—"your faith to God-ward."

Under "How?" write Romans 10:17—"Faith cometh by hearing."

Continue in this manner until you have exhausted the word "Faith" in the Concordance. Then such words as "Believe," "Belief," could be taken up and classified under the headings already made. In this way you will get a wonderful grasp of the truths of Scripture regarding faith.

If a Concordance is not handy at the time you desire to study, you will find in almost any one of the modern Teachers' Bibles a Topical Index, or Word-book. This will serve the purpose of a Concordance, but on a smaller scale.

To all those just beginning the systematic study of the Scriptures we most heartily recommend this plan of study. It most assuredly builds up the heart in faith and love as well as the head in knowledge.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE BY WORDS.

A very interesting and immensely popular way to study the Bible is by means of the words of Scripture. More attention is now being paid to this method than formerly.

The writer recently heard a sermon on "The Lord's Prayer." Some of the most impressive truths developed in the discourse were derived from the study of the words of the text. The preacher took the word "Heaven," and stated that in the original the first use of it—"Our Father which art in heaven"—was in the plural, and should read —"Our Father which art in the heavens." The second word "heaven" was in the singular: "As in heaven so on earth." From this he derived two beautiful thoughts: first, the place of our Father: He is in "the heavens." The Bible speaks of three heavens: the air, or firmament, where the birds are; the stellar system, where the stars are; and heaven itself, where God is, God's abiding place. Then he described how God ruled and cared for the birds of the air; how He guided the stars in their courses; and finally how He was supreme in the heaven of heavens. From this he deduced the power of our Father. A beautiful lesson truly from the study of words!

"Words are little things," says Trench, in *How to Study the English Bible,* "but they are not to be despised. A little key opens a precious casket, and a little coin will purchase what may save a life; and so, a little word may suggest a world of meaning, or become the turning point of a

destiny. It has been said that words are finite, whilst the things which they represent are infinite. This is true; but we cannot get at the infinite truth except through finite words. Bible words need to be carefully studied and well weighed; their usage must be mastered, and we must be prepared to give 'small change' for them, that is, to translate them into the language of our present daily life.

"But it may be said that as our Bible is only a translation we must not press its words too far. This is true. Yet the Bible is a very good translation, and if we read the Revised Version along with the Authorized, we shall never go very far wrong, and even without the help of the Revision we may safely lean upon the English Bible in all practical matters; and it is with reference to these that the following hints are offered:

"1. Many words have several shades of meaning. It has been said that the most notable words of the New Testament have a Biblical, an ecclesiastical, and a colloquial sense. At any rate, we should be watchful and raise the question—In what sense is this word used? Thus, 'life' may mean the course of life, the occupation of life, or the source of life, and may be used of vegetable, animal, or spiritual life. The same is true of death. The last words of Luke 15, run thus—'This thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.' It is manifestly not the ordinary death that is here referred to. Again, 'a day' does not always mean twenty-four hours. It may be a period of any extent. One of God's days may be a thousand years. We have to remember this when we are studying such subjects as the creative days or the Day of Judgment. A 'generation' in Scripture does not necessarily mean a period of thirty years. It may mean a hundred years (see Ex. 17:16), or it may mean a particular nationality or class of people (see Matt.

17:17 and 24:34). 'A week,' in the same manner, may signify a week of years (compare Lev. 25:8 with Dan. 9:24).

"It occasionally happens that the same verse may contain a word used in two senses. Thus, our Lord says, 'Let the dead bury their dead' (Matt. 8:22); and so in the Fourth Commandment, our seventh day of rest is ordered to be in correspondence with God's seventh day, though of course it is not of the same length.

"2. The English Bible contains some archaic or old-fashioned words, which need to be remembered. Sometimes they may be merely matters of spelling, such as straw for strew, pill for peel, peep for pipe, chapiter for capital. In other cases, the word is changed to a greater degree, as when we read of 'tiring the head' for attiring, 'table' and 'writing-table' for tablet, 'artillery' for archery, 'untempered mortar' for distemper. Or the word in its old sense has more or less gone out of use, as 'earing the ground' for ploughing, 'nephew' for grandson, 'carriage' for burden, 'prevent' for anticipate, 'champaign' for plain, 'chapman' for tradesman, 'governor' for pilot, 'by-and-by' for immediately, 'presently' for immediately, 'quick' for alive.

"3. Some words are ambiguous. Thus, when we read (Gen. 32:31) that Jacob 'halted,' we are to understand that he limped; and when the question is asked, 'How long halt ye between two opinions?' (1 Kings 18:21), it means, 'How long do you keep springing from opinion to opinion? It was the people's fickleness, not their hesitation, which was called in question. So, in the use of the word 'flood,' we have to distinguish between the 'waters of Noah,' and the flood or inundation of the Nile (Amos 8:8), and the rivers of Mesopotamia (Joshua 24:14). The English Bible has many such ambiguities.

"4. Words indicating relationship do not always signify what we Americans mean by them. A 'father' may be what we call a grandfather, or even a remote ancestor; as when the Jews said to our Lord, 'We have Abraham for our father.' So, a 'son' may be a grandson; thus Jehu, who is called the son of Nimshi (2 Kings 9:20), was really his grandson. An 'only son' may mean the only son of the same mother as well as father (Gen. 22:2), and one may be called a son who is only so by adoption or royal succession, as when Christ is called Joseph's son (compare 1 Chron. 3:16 with the 15th verse).

"5. Once more, there are words which have lost some of their old width and strength, having been toned down by modern use. Some have an offensive sense now, such as 'damnation,' 'lust,' 'vengeance'; others suggest a tamer idea than the old one, as in the case of 'offence,' 'edification'; or a more earthly shortsighted idea, as in the case of health and wealth and comfort. Others again are reduced in force through circumstances of our earthly life; thus, if we say 'help me,' we mean that we want only a little assistance, but in the Bible 'help me' means 'save me,' or 'do everything for me,; so to 'hope' and to 'believe' in ordinary English frequently imply some uncertainty, as when we say, 'I hope he will come,' or 'I believe he will come,' but there is no element of uncertainty in the hope and faith of the Bible.

"It is only as we read more widely and more watchfully that we get at the full usage of Bible words; and what is true of words is true also of idioms. Such recurring expressions as to lift the hand (*i. e.,* to swear), to shed blood (*i. e.,* to slay), to call upon the name of the Lord (*i. e.,* to worship), are often read by us without our giving them that due weight which Biblical usage demands."

Sufficient has been said to show the importance of Word study. The question now arises, How shall we go about it? In the following way:

Study each word of the text. Find out what is its original meaning. This can be done by the English as well as by the Greek student. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* is possibly the best book at present extant for this study.

Suppose you have this book. How shall you proceed to look up a word? Let the text you are studying be Romans 14:22: "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." You want to find out what is meant by the word "faith" in this passage.

Open the Concordance to the word "faith." Run your eye down the column until you come to the passage in Romans 14:22. At the end of the line you will see a number which refers you to a similar number at the back of the book. Before looking up this number, however, just take a glance up and down the column and notice how many different numbers are attached to the word "faith" in our English Version. These various numbers designate that the corresponding words—though rendered by the same word in our English Version—have a different shade of meaning from each and every other kindred word. Now turn to the Glossary in the back part of the Concordance,—look for the number you have noted as indicating the word "faith" in Romans 14:22. You will find that it does not mean "saving faith," but "persuasion." Romans 14:22 could read, "Art thou persuaded? Be persuaded to thyself before God."

Such a method of study opens up mines of wealth in God's Word.

*The words—the words in their place in the sentence—the words in connection with the scope of the writer—the words in connection with other parts of Scripture—is the division which includes all the inferences that can be legitimately drawn from the teachings of Divine truth.

1. Lessons may be drawn from the *words* of Scripture.

In Romans 14:17, we have a description of the kingdom of God. Such is the Gospel: it is God's reign; it originates in His grace; it is founded upon His power; it will illustrate His government.

In Hebrews 3:1, Christ is called the High Priest and the Apostle of our profession. Each word is significant. He was first selected and ordained of God. He was commissioned and sent by him. The guilt of rejecting Him is proportioned to His dignity. The efficacy of His salvation is secured by divine appointment. He is High Priest under the *Gospel;* therefore, though it is a dispensation of mercy, we need sacrifice and acceptance, and are dependent for both upon Him.

2. Lessons may be drawn from the *words in their place* in the sentence.

In 1 Peter 5:5, we are commanded to be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud. Clearly (a) humility, though despised by the heathen, is a Christian grace. (b) Our truest ornament (for this the Greek word for be clothed involves) is a just, that is, a humble estimate of ourselves, and that ornament must be so closely connected with us as that none shall be able to tear it away (so the Greek implies). (c) Every duty may be enforced by a reference to God's character. (d) Pride is a public conspicuous sin (so the Greek implies). (e) It braves God, and He sets Himself in array against it.

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*From Angus' *Bible Handbook.*

So in Romans 14:17, the kingdom of God is described as righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Hence it may be inferred (a) that peace is through righteousness only, (b) and joy is the fruit of righteousness and peace; (c) that a righteousness which brings with it neither peace nor joy is not the righteousness of the kingdom of God.

3. Lessons may be drawn from *words in connection with the context.*

Thus in Matthew 27:52, we read that many bodies of the saints which slept arose, but (verse 53) it was *after* the resurrection of our Lord. He therefore was the first-fruits of them that slept, and whatever His saints received they owed to Him.

Contrast 1 Timothy 1:15 with verse 4, and we shall gather that the legends of the Jews and the stories of the Gentiles are compared to fables, the Gospel to undoubted truth.

An illustration of this method as applied within a book of the Bible is seen in the following study of "In love" in Ephesians:

"IN LOVE."

Before Him in love—Eph. 1:4.
Rooted and grounded in love—Eph. 3:17.
Forbearing one another in love—Eph 4:2.
Speaking the truth in love—Eph. 4:15.
Edifying the body in love—Eph. 4:16.
Walking in love—Eph. 5:2.

A work that will be found highly helpful in the pursuit of this method of study is *Word Studies in the New Testament*, by Marvin R. Vincent. It exhibits the shades of meaning of the original words, thus affording much light as to the meaning of the different writers.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE.

It is a question as to whether there is any more profitable method of Bible study—so far as deriving personal benefit is concerned—than the study of the lives of its strong characters. The Bible abounds in biography. In fact it is wholly a book of sacred biography. Is it not possible that God knew that the best way to reach human lives was through the history of the rises and falls of other human lives? What is more interesting to us than biography? How quickly we pass over hearsay for personal experience! There is something in human nature everywhere to which biography strongly appeals. The greater part of God's revelation to man has come *through* men. It is equally true that this revelation comes *in* men —in their varied lives and experiences.

Each of the great characters of the Bible had a mission to the world in what they were, in endowment, in character. Abraham was called "the friend of God," and the world in his day caught a fresh view of God and His relation to men because Abraham lived as he did. Moses, the great lawgiver and leader; Samuel, the prophet and seer of God; Job, the suffering saint; David, the mixture of saint and sinner, and yet a man after God's own heart; evangelical Isaiah; burning Ezekiel; weeping Jeremiah; peering Daniel; John, the loving disciple; Peter, the ardent, impulsive, follower of the Christ; Paul, the great missionary apostle to the Gentiles: each of these Bible

characters has his own peculiar message to the hearts and lives of men.

It need not seem strange, then, if this method of study should appeal to human life and personal experience more than any other. It is God speaking to men through men; revealing the laws that should govern our lives, through the medium of other lives that have been governed by these laws.

These were men and women of like passions with ourselves. The Bible is very frank and candid about them. Study them as real persons, going back of the dim mist that hangs around them. Take Barnabas, for example, and make a list of all the passages mentioning him. Study these. Look them up in a good commentary and then make out a little character sketch of the Son of Consolation. And study Jesus' character as Bushnell does in his little book, *The Character of Jesus Forbidding His Possible Classification with Men.*

### The Biography of Elijah.

Than this there is possibly no more romantic and fascinating biography in the whole Bible. James (5:17) says, "he was a man of like passions with us," and possibly it is because he was this, a common man, that his life is so fascinating, and beckons us on to its own high and glorious level. His life might be studied as follows:

1. *His early days and home.*

The first mention of Elijah is in 1 Kings 17. There is no record of his previous life or parentage. He was doubtless a poor farmer's boy. What an encouragement to us!

*2. His call of God to his life work.*

His first appearance before Ahab, 1 Kings 17:1.

*3. God's assurance of protection and provision,* 1 Kings 17:2-17.

*4. His divine creaentials,* 1 Kings 17:18-24.

*5. His second appearance before Ahab,* 1 Kings 18.

(a.) Meeting Obadiah (a compromising servant of God), v.3-16.
(b.) Meeting Ahab (an enemy of God), v.17,18.
(c.) Challenge to the prophets of Baal, v.19-24.
(d.) Perfect confidence in God and its victory, v.25-40.
(e.) The promised rain, v.41-45 (compare James 5: 17-19).

*6. His flight from Jezebel,* 1 Kings 19.

(a.) His plea with Jehovah, v.1-9.
(b.) God's care of the prophet, v.9-15.
(c.) The call of a successor (Elisha), v.15-21.

*7. His third appearance before Ahab,* 1 Kings 21:17-27.

Elijah denounces Ahab's sin of murder and theft. Here is a lesson of boldness!

*8. His appearance before Ahaziah, 2* Kings 1.

(1.) His rebuke of the king's infidelity, v.3-8.
(2.) Result of his faithfulness to God's command, v.9.
(3.) God's protection of His servant, v.10-16.

9. *His translation*, 2 Kings 2:1-14.

A study of these salient points in the biography of Elijah will furnish the student with abundant knowledge of the working of God with men. It will encourage him to be faithful in his service for God. It will reveal to him the great truth of Scripture that God uses even weak instruments for the accomplishment of His purposes.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE BY PERIODS.

Another very profitable method of Bible study, and one that affords the student a general view of the Bible, is that of study by periods.

God's dealings with man may be properly divided into definite eras or periods, each successive one being an enlargement, a complement of the preceding. In these various periods, and the revelation of God given to man therein, we are enabled to form an idea of the adaptation of revelation to the needs and receptive capacity of man. Truths revealed embryo in one period are manifested full grown and matured in a later period.

Besides being a method that is profoundly interesting, the study of the Bible by periods is a pure necessity in order to a general grasp and comprehension of the entire circle of divine revelation as given in the Scriptures. Many one-sided, erratic interpretations could be avoided by a knowledge of God's "periodic" dealings with His people. Things allowed (not sanctioned) by God in one period, because of the moral infancy of the race, are strictly prohibited in later periods, when God's fuller light had shone upon His people. Thus contrast the polygamy permitted in Abraham's day with the monogamy of Christ's ethics.

Regarding the chronology of the Old Testament, in general it may be said that there is no certain and absolutely reliable chronology covering this period. The sys-

tem as set forth by Ussher has for many years been generally (though by no means universally) accepted. Although it has its mistakes, it is considered on the whole as reliable as any chronology of the Old Testament we have at present.

In the study of the periods of the Bible it is well at first to begin with a general view, taking in no details. For example:

**General Periods of Old Testament history.**

1. The Antedeluvian period (4004-2348 B. C.).
2. The period of the early races (2348-1921 B. C.).
3. The Patriarchal period (1921-1491 B. C.)
4. The Theocratic period (1491-1095 B. C.).
5. The Regal period (1095-587 B. C.).

**Another Periodic view.**

1. The Adamic period—Creation to the Flood—(4004-2348 B. C.).
2. The Noahic period—the Flood to the Exodus—(2348-1491 B. C.).
3. The Mosaic period—the Exodus to the Judges—(1491-1141 B. C.).
4. The Davidic period—the Judges to the first temple—(1141-1021 B. C.).
5. The Solomonic period—the first temple to Ezra, or the close of prophecy—(1012-430 B. C.).
6. The Silent period—the close of prophecy to Christ—430 B. C.-A. D. 1.).

Dr. H. T. Sell, in his *Bible Study by Periods*, gives the following table of six great periods, with four principal points under each:

PERIODS.

I. IN THE BEGINNING.

1. Creation.
2. The Garden of Eden.
3. The flood.
4. The ancient world.

II. THE THEOCRACY.

5. Abraham and the chosen people.
6. Moses and the exodus.
7. Joshua and the conquest.
8. The judges of Israel.

III. THE KINGDOM.

9. The rise of the Kingdom.
10. The glory of the Kingdom.
11. Division and fall of the Kingdom.
12. Prophets of the Kingdom.

IV. THE CAPTIVITY.

13. The captivity.
14. The return from exile.
15. Prophets of the exile and return.
16. Malachi to Christ.

V. CHRIST ON EARTH.

17. The advent of the Messiah.
18. The life of Christ on earth.
19. The resurrection and ascension.
20. Supremacy of Christ.

VI. THE FIRST CHURCHES.

21. The churches in the Acts.
22. The epistles of Paul.
23. The general epistles.
24. The message of John to the churches.

After the student has gained this general view of the periods of the Bible, he can then fill in, very gradually, the leading events under each period. In this way he will soon have a comprehensive view of the whole Bible.

For example, the following important events could be recorded under the first, or antedeluvian period (4004-2348 B. C.).

1. Creation of man—fall—promise—(Genesis 1-3).
2. Birth of Cain and Abel—(Genesis 4).
3. Birth of Seth, in place of Abel—(Genesis 4:25).
4. Birth of Enoch—translation—(Genesis 5).
5. Birth of Noah—(Genesis 5:28,29)
6. Flood—(Genesis 6 and 7).

It can be readily seen how the student, by this method of study, quickly acquires a comprehensive view of God's dealings with men in all ages of the world's history. He will see in this as in no other method of Bible study the law of adaptation—God adapting His revelation to men in so far as they were in a fit condition to receive it and communicate it to others.

# CHAPTER XI

## STUDY OF THE PARABLES AND MIRACLES OF OUR LORD.*

Much of the teaching of Jesus was hidden in parables; a great part of His divine power manifested itself in the sphere of the miraculous. To discover the hidden meaning of the truth of the kingdom as concealed in the parables of Jesus; to discern the might of the omnipotence of the God-man as revealed in His miracles—this is the duty as well as the privilege of the student of the divine Word.

In a sense, yea, in a very real sense, he must specialize in his search after the knowledge of truth. Some of the most beautiful things the great Teacher come from God ever said, He gave utterance to in parabolic form. Does He desire to reveal the loving heart of the heavenly Father? Then the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15) eminently sets it forth. Is His purpose to show the necessity of prayer and the assurance of its being answered? Then the parables of the unjust judge (Luke 18) and the importunate man (Luke 11) serve this beneficent design. If the real lesson to be taught is concerning our Father's rich and bountiful provision for the soul, then the miraculous feeding of the five thousand (Matt. 14; John 6), and of the four thousand (Matt. 15) apply and forcefully illustrate this truth.

If, on the other hand, the Master desires to teach His people the need of faith on their part as being necessary to obtain the blessing and inherit the promises of God,

*From Girdlestone's *How to Study the English Bible.*

then the miraculous curing of the demoniac child (Matt. 17:14; Mark 9:17; Luke 9:38) abundantly illustrates this truth.

Other illustrations might be added, but enough has been cited to show the student what a mine of wealth of truth there is concealed in the parables and miracles of our Lord.

### OUR SAVIOUR'S PARABLES.

A parable is a form of speech under which something is presented to us in lieu of some other thing which it resembles, and which it is desired to illustrate. The very word parable implies comparison, being derived from two Greek words meaning the placing of two things side by side (as it were) for the purpose of comparing them. Thus a narrative of events, either real or supposed, is made the medium by which the attention is arrested, offense is avoided, conviction is secured, and important truth is illustrated and enforced with great power upon the heart and conscience. Our Saviour's parables are remarkable for clearness, force, simplicity, and appropriateness, and they are always employed to convey truths of the first importance. They relate to daily objects (Matt. 20:1-14; Mark 4.26-29) to domestic labors (Matt. 13:33), to common occurrences (Luke 7:36-50; 10:25-37, and even to the scenery by which the Great Teacher and His hearers were surrounded (Matt. 13:47-50; Luke 13:6-9; John 4:35-38). Thus they were especially adapted to the unlearned and at the same time prejudiced persons whom He was addressing, and being easily apprehended, the force of them was instantly felt and acknowledged.

### WHY SPEAK IN PARABLES?

It was because the Jews were, as a nation and to a great extent individually, too prejudiced to be instructed more

clearly, that our Lord spoke to them in parables, which in many cases He left unexplained. For some time our Lord avoided an open disclosure of His character, even forbidding others to declare it (Matt. 16:20; Mark 3:11, 12; Luke 4:41). He almost always calls Himself the Son of Man, and sometimes waives the assertion of His divinity, as in His conversation with the rich young man. Everything in our Lord's teaching while on earth was done on that principle of gradual development, which is to be noticed throughout the Bible, from the earliest promises of the Saviour to come, in Genesis, until He was fully revealed at His resurrection from the dead as the Messiah. Even the minds of His chosen apostles were too prejudiced to receive doctrines which it required our Saviour's death, resurrection, and ascension to illustrate. He touched on them from time to time it is true, and more especially in the sad and solemn converse with His apostles on the night before His crucifixion; when, in the words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name He will give it you; Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full (John 16:23,24)." He seems to allude for the first time in His teaching to the doctrine of approaching the mercy-seat of God through Christ as our great High Priest, which is one of the most distinguishing and prominent features of the epistles. Before saying this our Saviour had told the attentive wondering eleven—the traitor Judas had already gone out from among them—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth (John 16:12,13)"; and afterwards He said again, "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto

you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father (John 16:25)."

PARABOLIC TEACHING TEMPORARY.

And in accordance with these sayings of our Lord, after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the spiritual eyes and understanding of the apostles were opened, and all was made clear to them. The time for teaching by parables, under a veil as it were, had passed, and the apostles never at any time resorted to this method of instruction, so necessary while our Lord was still with them, but boldly and unremittingly preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2), Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever (Heb. 13:8), without the slightest attempt at disguise. The Lord had suffered, risen, ascended into heaven, the Comforter had come, and the Christian dispensation was revealed in all the riches of its glorious fulness.

The parables of our Saviour, as recorded by the evangelists, are forty in number. Of these thirty-one are narrated in one Gospel only, three in two Gospels, and six in three Gospels. John is the only evangelist who does not give any of our Lord's teaching by parables in his Gospel. A list of these parables is given in the following table, classified in accordance with their relation by one or more evangelists. In the case of each parable, the name of the place in which it was spoken is given, the part or parts of Scripture in which it is recorded, and the lesson it conveys.

TABLE OF OUR SAVIOUR'S PARABLES.*

*1. Recorded in one Gospel only.*

1. The tares in the wheat. Gennesareth. Matt. 13: 24-30). The good and bad together during life, but separated at the judgment.

*From *Bible Student's Handbook.*

2. The hidden treasure. Gennesareth. (Matt. 13:44). The great value of the Gospel.

3. The pearl of great price. Gennesareth. (Matt. 13: 45,46). The great value of the gospel, and the sinner in search of salvation.

4. The draw-net in fishing. Gennesareth. (Matt. 13: 47,48). Separation of the just and the wicked at the final judgment, though together during life.

5. The householder. Gennesareth. (Matt. 13:52). True members of Christ's church.

6. The unmerciful servant. Capernaum. (Matt. 18: 23-35). The necessity of forgiveness to others, and the danger of ingratitude.

7. The laborers in the vineyard. Jerusalem. (Matt. 20:1-16). Christians receive their call at various times in life and under various circumstances.

8. The two sons. Jerusalem. (Matt. 21:28-31). Rebellion against God's will followed by repentance, and the sinfulness and insincerity of mere profession.

9. The marriage of the king's son. Mount of Olives. (Matt. 22:1-14). Reluctance of men to embrace the Gospel, and the necessity for righteousness shown in the wedding garment, which is the robe of Christ's righteousness.

10. The ten virgins. Mount of Olives. (Matt. 25:1-13). The difference of conduct exhibited by watchful and careless Christians.

11. The ten talents. Mount of Olives. (Matt. 25:14-30). The necessity that is incumbent on every man to make good use of the advantages that God has given him.

12. The sheep and the goats. Mount of Olives. (Matt. 25:31-46). The final separation of the good and the wicked at the day of judgment.

13. Seed growing unperceived. Gennesareth. (Mark 4:26-29). Gradual growth of grace and religion in the heart of man.

14. The master of the house on a journey. Mount of Olives. (Mark 13:32-37). The necessity for constant watching, as the time of Christ's second coming is not known.

15. The two debtors. Galilee. (Luke 7:41-43). Gratitude for forgiveness commensurate with the enormity of the offense forgiven.

16. The good Samaritan. Jerusalem. (Luke 10:30-37). Man's duty to his neighbor shown, and its performance enforced. All who are sick and suffering, in want, and oppressed, are our neighbors, irrespective of color, creed, opinions, or nationality.

17. The friend at midnight. Jerusalem. (Luke 11:5-10). The beneficial effects of perseverance in prayer.

18. The foolish rich man. Jerusalem. (Luke 12:16-21.) The uncertainty of life and the evil of being worldly-minded.

19. The wedding feast. Jerusalem. (Luke 12:35-38). Necessity of constant watchfulness, for none may tell or know when Christ's second coming shall be.

20. The faithful steward and neglectful servant. Jerusalem. (Luke 12:42-48). An exhortation to the conscientious performance of our duties at all times to God and man.

21. The barren fig tree. Jerusalem. (Luke 13:6-9). Unprofitableness under all the means of grace appointed by God to bring us to Christ, and to eternal life through Him.

22. Strife for chief rooms at feasts. Jerusalem. (Luke 14:7-11). Humility desirable and necessary.

23. The great supper. Jerusalem. (Luke 14:16-24). All men called to salvation through Christ; their reluctance to come through worldliness.

24. The lost piece of money. Jerusalem. (Luke 15: 8-10). The loving care of the Saviour of the world for sinful men, and the joy in heaven over repentant sinners.

25. The prodigal son. Jerusalem. (Luke 15:11-32). The love of God towards sinners, however reckless, and His ready acceptance on the first signs of repentance.

26. The unjust steward. Jerusalem. (Luke 16:1-12). Need of preparation for eternity.

27. The rich man and Lazarus. Jerusalem. (Luke 16:19-31). Men's actions and sufferings while on earth will meet a suitable recompense in the life to come.

28. The unprofitable servants. Jerusalem. (Luke 17: 5-10). God demands all our services, and it is impossible for any man to do more than is required of him.

29. The unjust judge. Jerusalem. (Luke 18:1-8). Advantages of persistent prayer: God hears all who address Him sincerely in prayer, though He may appear not to hear, or may seem to be long in answering.

30. The Pharisee and the publican. Jerusalem. (Luke 18:9-14). Self-righteousness of no avail before God; humility and self-abasement acceptable.

31. The pounds. Jerusalem. (Luke 19:12-27). Diligence brings its reward; sloth its punishment.

*2. Recorded in two Gospels.*

32. Houses built on rock and sand. Galilee. (Matt. 7:24-27; Luke 6:46-49). Exemplification of the stability of consistent profession, and the instability of false profession

33. The leaven hidden in meal. Gennesareth. (Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:20-21). The influence of religion when it has once taken root in the heart of man.

34. The lost sheep. Jerusalem. (Matt. 18:12,13; Luke 15:3-7). The persistent care of Christ in seeking to bring men to repentance, and the joy over the penitent.

*3. Recorded in three Gospels.*

35. The patch of new cloth on an old garment. Capernaum. (Matt. 9:16; Mark 2:21; Luke 5:36). Effect of new doctrine on hearts that retain old prejudices.

36. New wine in old bottles. Capernaum. (Matt. 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37,38). The effect of the truth on hearts unregenerate and not prepared to receive it.

37. The sower and the seed. Gennesareth. (Matt. 13:3-23; Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:4-15). Hearers of the word are divided into four different classes, according to the reception of God's Holy Word and its effects on their hearts.

38. The grain of mustard seed. Gennesareth. (Matt. 13:31,32; Mark 4:30-33; Luke 13:18,19.) Exemplification of the beginning and growth of the Gospel in the heart.

39. The wicked husbandman. Jerusalem. (Matt. 21:33-44; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-18). The rejection of the prophets and our Saviour by the Jews.

40. The fig tree and all the trees. Mount of Olives. (Matt. 24:32,33; Mark 13:28,29; Luke 21:29-31). Signs of the times, as showing, firstly, the destruction of Jerusalem, then rapidly approaching, and then Christ's second coming.

FURTHER CLASSIFICATION AND TEACHING OF THE PARABLES.

Angus tells us that Neander has classified the parables of our Lord with reference to the truths taught in them,

and their connection with His kingdom, and thus exhibits Neander's classification. The numbers have reference to the numbering of the parables in the foregoing list.

*1. Parables on the progress of the kingdom of Christ.*

The sower and his seed (37); the tares in the wheat (1); The grain of mustard seed (38); the leaven hidden in meal (33); the draw-net in fishing (4).

*2. Moral requisites for entering the kingdom of Christ.*

(1). Anti-Pharisaic parables, or negative requisites. The lost sheep (34); the lost piece of money (24); the prodigal son (25); the Pharisee and the publican (30); strife for chief rooms at feasts (22).

(2.) Positive requisites.

The two sons (8); the hidden treasure (2); the pearl of great price (3); the tower and the warring king (*) Luke 14:28-33); the marriage of the king's son, in reference to the wedding garment (9). The parable marked thus (*) is not included in the above list, and, although in the strict sense of the word the teaching it conveys is given under the form of a parable, it is not generally given in lists of our Saviour's parables.

*3. Call to enter the kingdom of Christ.*

The marriage of the king's son (9); the great supper (23).

*4. Activity in the kingdom of Christ.*

The vine (*) (John 15:1)—a parable in the sense of comparison certainly, but not literally numbered among

Christ's parables; the wicked husbandmen (39); the ten talents (11); the barren fig-tree (21); the laborers in the vineyard (7).

5. *The true spirit of the kingdom of Christ.*

(1.) Forgiveness.

The good Samaritan (16); the unmerciful servant (6); the two debtors (15).

(2.) The right use of wordly possessions.

The unjust steward (26); the rich man and Lazarus (27).

(3.) The Christian spirit under the name of prudence.

The ten virgins (10).

(4). Prayer.

The unjust judge (29); the friend at midnight (17).

Other authors, continues Angus, have adopted a different division. Dr. Grey divides them into—

(1.) Such as represent the nature and progress of the Gospel dispensation.

(2.) Such as represent the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles.

(3.) Such as deliver moral instruction.

Greswell divides them into the prophetic and the moral. Lisco's division is preferable to either. He regards them as of three classes:

(1.) Such as represent the heavenly kingdom as containing truths and powers divine in their origin and blessed in their effects. (See preceding lists, 37, 38, 33, 8, 2).

(2.) Such as represent the heavenly kingdom *founded* on these truths, and these are—

1. Those that respect the church as a whole, 21, 39, 9, 23 (calling and election differ), 1, 4.

2. Those that respect the entrance of individuals into the church, 34, 24, 25, and the parables of the tower and the warring king.

(3.) Such as represent the heavenly kingdom in the faith, love, and hope of its members. In relation to—

1. Faith, humility, etc., 7, 30, 8, 27, 10.
2. Love, 6, 16.
3. Hope, 10, 11.

### RULES FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE PARABLES.

Some useful rules are laid down and considerations proposed by Nicholls for the guidance of those who are endeavoring to draw the intended instruction from the various parables. These rules and considerations are given here in an abridged form.

*1. Guard against fanciful interpretations.*

For example, the parable of the good Samaritan, obviously intended to illustrate the second great commandment of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," has sometimes been thus perverted. Such modes of interpretation are a dangerous departure from the simplicity of the Gospel. They have the effect of producing a disrelish for the pure milk of the Word, exciting a morbid longing for what is ingenious rather than that what is true.

*2. Never attempt to prove any point of doctrine or duty from single phrases or incidental circumstances.*

From the circumstances of the rich man addressing Abraham (Luke 16:24), to infer the propriety of prayers to glorified saints is altogether unwarrantable. When it is said that Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom, it is meant

that he was received to a place of peculiar honor, as was John, when he was leaning on Jesus' bosom (John 13:23) at the Last Supper. At Jewish feasts, when three or more persons reclined on one couch, the place of chief honor was that of the guest who lay in such a manner that he might repose his head on the bosom of the host or master of the feast.

Again, no doctrinal application should be made of circumstances only introduced to fill up the body of the narrative, or to give it ornament or variety. For instance, in the parable of the wicked husbandmen, it is said, "They will reverence my son" (Matt. 21:37). No one for a moment imagines this to imply that God was ignorant of the actual reception which His Son would meet with from the Jews. We cannot infer from the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1) that because five are represented as wise and five as foolish, half of those who make a profession of religion will finally be saved and half finally perish. In the parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15:4), only one in one hundred went astray; in that of the ten pieces of silver, the proportion lost was one in ten; evidently showing that too much stress is not to be laid on every circumstance of a parable, otherwise the Bible may soon be made to contradict itself.

*3. Consider carefully the design of the speaker.*

Our Lord's design in the parable of the ten virgins is declared by Him in Matthew 25:13, and His design in the parable of the lost sheep, the lost piece of money, and the prodigal son may easily be inferred from the occasion which introduced them (see Luke 15:2). Chrysostom remarks, "We ought not to lay too much stress upon single words and phrases; when we have learnt the scope and design of the parable, we need not be anxious about any-

thing but the moral or useful instruction principally intended thereby." Thus in the parable of the prodigal son we need not inquire who are meant by the hired servants, nor seek for any far-fetched Scriptural interpretation of the ring, etc., for the putting on of the ring naturally expresses the prodigal's perfect restoration to the privileges of a son, and so far falls in with the general scope of the parable, but to pursue it further might be to impair its meaning.

In the parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16:1), if we do not attend to the design of our Lord we may feel a difficulty in the fact that He did not more pointedly condemn the man's injustice. "Jerome of old," as Poole remarks, "thought this parable was very obscure; and Julian and other apostates, together with some of the heathen philosophers, took occasion from it to reproach the doctrine of Christ, as teaching and commanding acts of unrighteousness," whereas, by observing that the single point here is the *means* used for the attainment of the end, the whole difficulty vanishes: for it is evident that in reference to the means which the unjust steward used, he showed a forethought well calculated to secure his end, and that in this single point of comparison the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light; that is, they better adapt their means to their end.

*4. The sacred writers and our Lord in His parables sometimes argue with men on their own principles, rather than on what is true in fact.*

Thus the Pharisees (Luke 15:7) were not really "just men who needed no repentance," but they thought themselves so. Again (Luke 15:25), the elder brother represents the Pharisees; yet it is not true that they had served God and never transgressed His commandments, but they

thought so, and upon their own principles our blessed Lord shows how wrong was their opposition to those publicans and sinners who sought mercy at His hands (see also Luke 19:22).

5. *It is important to consider the circumstances of those to whom the parable was immediately addressed and in what sense it is probable they would have understood it.*

One notion of the Pharisees, for instance, is that of very bad men, because the hypocrisy of their character has been so fully exposed by our Lord; but the notion a few had of them was just the contrary, and this must be our clue to the interpretation of the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, the design of which is to show that the only ground of justification before God, even for those whom we may consider the best of men, is the plea of mercy; that if we trust in our own righteousness, though, like the Pharisees, we acknowledge it to be the gift of God, we shall go away from His presence unforgiven (Luke 18:9, etc.).

6. *Some of our Lord's parables are prophetic.*

That of the mustard seed (Matt. 13:31) foretells the spread of the Gospel from very small beginnings; that of the husbandmen (Matt. 21:33) the malice of the Jews in putting Christ to death, and their consequent destruction; that of the sower (Matt. 13:3) is prophetic of the various effects which the Gospel produces upon the hearts of men; that of the tares (Matt. 13:24) and that of the net (Matt. 13:47) show that there will be a mixture of good and bad in the church till the day of judgment. Our Lord's parables frequently point to the day of judgment; and "no doubt," remarks Boyle, "other prophecies will then be discovered in them which are as yet unregarded."

## OUR SAVIOUR'S MIRACLES.

In studying our Saviour's miracles the student will not only derive immediate historical lessons, but in many cases will recognize them to be parables in action. The following table presents a complete list of the miracles, with their location in the Gospels.

| *Miracles.* | *Matt.* | *Mark.* | *Luke.* | *John.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I. *Narrated in one Gospel only.* | | | | |
| Two blind men healed | 9:27 | | | |
| A dumb demoniac healed | 9:32 | | | |
| Stater in the mouth of the fish | 17:24 | | | |
| The deaf and dumb man healed | ..... | 7:31 | | |
| A blind man healed | ..... | 8:22 | | |
| When Christ passed unseen through the multitude | ..... | ..... | 4:30 | |
| Draught of fishes | ..... | ..... | 5:1 | |
| Raising the widow's son | ..... | ..... | 7:11 | |
| Healing the crooked woman | ..... | ..... | 13:11 | |
| " " man with the dropsy | ..... | ..... | 14:1 | |
| " " ten lepers | ..... | ..... | 17:11 | |
| " " ear of Malchus, servant of the high priest | ..... | ..... | 22:50 | |
| Turning water into wine | ..... | ..... | ..... | 2:1 |
| Healing the nobleman's son (of fever) | ..... | ..... | ..... | 4:46 |
| " " impotent man at Bethesda | ..... | ..... | ..... | 5:1 |
| " " man born blind | ..... | ..... | ..... | 9:1 |
| Raising of Lazarus | ..... | ..... | ..... | 11:43 |
| Draught of fishes | ..... | ..... | ..... | 21:1 |
| II. *Narrated in two Gospels.* | | | | |
| Demoniac in synagogue cured | ..... | 1:23 | 4:33 | |
| Healing centurion's servant (of palsy) | 8:5 | ..... | 7:1 | |
| The blind and dumb demoniac | 12:22 | ..... | 11:14 | |
| Healing the daughter of the Syrophenician | 15:21 | 7:24 | | |
| Feeding the four thousand | 15:32 | 8:1 | | |
| Cursing the fig-tree | 21:18 | 11:12 | | |
| III. *Narrated in three Gospels.* | | | | |
| Healing the leper | 8:2 | 1:40 | 5:12 | |
| " Peter's mother-in-law | 8:14 | 1:30 | 4:38 | |
| Stilling the storm | 8:26 | 4:37 | 8:22 | |
| The legion of devils entering swine | 8:28 | 5:1 | 8:27 | |
| Healing the man sick of the palsy | 9:2 | 2:3 | 5:18 | |
| " woman with issue of blood | 9:20 | 5:25 | 8:43 | |
| Raising of Jairus' daughter | 9:23 | 5:38 | 8:49 | |
| Healing the man with a withered hand | 12:10 | 3:1 | 6:6 | |
| Walking on the sea | 14:25 | 6:48 | ..... | 6:19 |
| Curing demoniac child | 17:14 | 9:17 | 9:38 | |
| " blind Bartimæus (Two blind men, Matt. 20) | 20:30 | 10:46 | 18:35 | |
| IV. *Narrated in four Gospels.* | | | | |
| Feeding the five thousand | 14:19 | 6:35 | 9:12 | 6:5 |

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE STORY OF THE PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE.

If that part of the Bible which is couched in what we call prophetic language, were to be eliminated from the sacred volume, what an awful gap would thereby be made in the revelation of God to His creatures! What an abridged Bible we would have! Some of the sweetest lessons, as well as some of the severest warnings, are couched in the prophecies of Scripture.

Too little attention has been paid in days past to the study of the prophets. All our labors were bestowed upon the teachings of Jesus and the apostles. To-day, however, our attention is being directed to the equally inspired message of God through His prophets. God, at sundry times, and in divers manners, *did* speak through the prophets, as well as, in these last days, through His Son. There is such a thing as the "Gospel of Isaiah."

### FULFILLED PROPHECY.

It may be questioned whether there is any more convincing proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures than that afforded by fulfilled prophecies.

Dr. Cyrus Hamlin once told the following story. While he was in Constantinople, soon after the Crimean war, a colonel in the Turkish army called to see him, and said:

"I want to ask you one question. What proof can you give me that the Bible is what you claim it to be—the Word of God?"

Dr. Hamlin evaded the question, and drew him into conversation, during which he learned that his visitor had traveled a great deal, especially in the East in the region of the Euphrates.

"Were you ever in Babylon?" asked the doctor.

"Yes, and that reminds me of a curious experience I had there. I am very fond of sport, and having heard that the ruins of Babylon abound in game, I determined to go there for a week's shooting. Knowing that it was not considered safe for a man to be there except in the company of several others—and money being no object to me—I engaged a sheik with his followers to accompany me for a large sum. We reached Babylon and pitched our tents. A little before sundown I took my gun and strolled out to have a look around. The holes and caverns among the mounds which cover the ruins are infested with game, which, however, is rarely seen except at night. I caught sight of one or two animals in the distance, and then turned my steps toward our encampment, intending to begin my sport as soon as the sun had set. What was my surprise to find the men striking the tents! I went to the sheik and protested most strongly. I had engaged him for a week, and was paying him handsomely, and here he was starting off before our contract had scarcely begun. Nothing I could say, however, would induce him to remain.

" 'It isn't safe,' he said; 'no mortal flesh dare stay here after sunset. In the dark ghosts, goblins, ghouls, and all sorts of things come out of the holes and caverns, and whoever is found here is taken off by them and becomes one of themselves.'

"Finding that I could not persuade him, I said, 'Well, as it is I'm paying you more than I ought to, but if you'll stay I'll double it.'

"'No,' he said, 'I couldn't stay for all the money in the world. No Arab has ever seen the sun go down on Babylon. But I want to do what is right by you. We'll go off to a place about an hour distant and come back at daybreak.'

"And go they did. And my sport had to be given up."

"As soon as he had finished," said Dr. Hamlin, "I took my Bible and read from it the 13th chapter of Isaiah: 'And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there: but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there: and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures: and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.'"

"That's it exactly," said the Turk, when I had finished, "but that is history you've been reading."

"No," answered Dr. Hamlin, "it is prophecy. Come, you're an educated man. You know that the Old Testament was translated into Greek about three hundred years before Christ."

He acknowledged that it was.

"And the Hebrew was given at least two hundred years before that?"

"Yes."

"Well, wasn't this written when Babylon was in its glory, and isn't it prophecy?"

"I'm not prepared to give you an answer now," he replied. "I must have time to think it over."

"Very well," Dr. Hamlin said, "Do so, and come back when you're ready and give me an answer."

What an unexpected testimony to the truth of the Bible in regard to the fulfillment of prophecy did that Turkish officer give, and how it behooves us to familiarize ourselves with such an important defence of the inspiration of God's Word!

For almost four thousand years the only knowledge the Jews had of their Messiah was prophetic. In the predictions and picturesque portrayals of the Messiah in the messages of their prophets lay the only tangible knowledge of Him who was to be their Redeemer and Lord.

Our Lord and His apostles had only the Old Testament —mostly prophetic—to search for the knowledge of the purposes of God for man. Yet how diligently they searched the prophets! What stirring, what heart-searching and soul-comforting truths they discovered from this unfathomable mine of divine truth! We cannot do better than follow their example.

The study of each prophetic book can be governed by the suggestions given in the chapter on "The Study of the Bible by Books."

The themes of prophecy form an interesting course of study: Such themes as the first advent and the second coming of Christ, as set forth in the prophets; the millenium; the future restoration of the Jews; the resurrection; the final issue of God's government on the earth—these, and many others will be found exceedingly profitable, and worthy of devout and deepest study. Below is an illustrative study of prophecies relating to Christ. It shows what a complete record of the life of the promised Messiah was given in prophecy:

PROPHECIES RELATING TO CHRIST.

**1. His First Advent.**

The fact, Gen. 3:15; Deut. 18:15; Ps. 89:20; Isa. 2:2; 28:16; 32:1; 35:4; 42:6; 49:1; 55:4; Ezek. 34:24; Dan. 2:44; Mic. 4:1; Zech. 3:8.

The time, Gen. 49:10; Num. 24:17; Dan. 9:24; Mal. 3:1.

His Divinity, Ps. 2:7, 11; 45:6, 7, 11; 72:8; 102:24-27; 89:26, 27; 110:1; Isa. 9:6; 25:9; 40:10; Jer. 23:6; Mic. 5:2; Mal. 3:1.

Human Generation, Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 21:12; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; 49:10; 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 18:4-6, 50; 22:22, 23; 89:4, 29, 36; 132:11; Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; 33:15.

**2. His Forerunner.**

Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; 4:5.

**3. His Nativity and Early Years.**

The fact, Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Jer. 31:22.
The place, Num. 24:17, 19; Mic. 5:2.
Adoration by Magi, Ps. 72:10, 15; Isa. 60:3, 6.
Descent into Egypt, Hos. 11:1.
Massacre of Innocents, Jer. 31:15.

**4. His Mission and Office.**

Mission, Gen. 12:3; 49:10; Num. 24:19; Deut. 18:18; Ps. 21:1; Isa. 59:20; Jer. 33:16.
Priest like Melchizedek, Ps. 110:4.
Prophet like Moses, Deut. 18:15.
Conversion of Gentiles, Isa. 11:10; Deut. 32:43; Ps.

18:49; 19:4; 117:1; Isa. 42:1; 45:23; 49:6; Hos. 1:10; 2:23; Joel 2:32.

Galilee, ministry in, Isa. 9:1, 2.

Miracles, Isa. 35:5, 6; 42:7; 53:4.

Spiritual graces, Ps. 45:7; Isa. 11:2; 42:1; 53:9; 61:1, 2.

Preaching, Ps. 2:7; 78:2; Isa. 2:3; 61:1: Mic. 4:2.

Purification of Temple, Ps. 69:9.

**5. His Passion.**

Rejection by Jews and Gentiles, Ps. 2:1; 22:12; 41:5; 56:5; 69:8; 118:22, 23; Isa. 6:9, 10; 8:14; 29:13; 53:1; 65:2.

Persecution, Ps. 22:6; 35:7, 12; 56:5; 71:10; 109:2; Isa. 49:7; 53:3.

Triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Ps. 8:2; 118:25, 26; Zech. 9:9.

Betrayal by own friend, Ps. 41:9; 55:13; Zech. 13:6.

Betrayal for thirty pieces, Zech. 11:12.

Betrayer's death, Ps. 55:15, 23; 109:17.

Purchase of potter's field, Zech. 11:13.

Desertion by disciples, Zech. 13:7.

False accusation, Ps. 27:12; 35:11; 109:2; Ps. 2:1, 2.

Silence under accusation, Ps. 38:13; Isa. 53:7.

Mocking, Ps. 22:7, 8, 16; 109:25.

Insult, buffeting, spitting, scourging, Ps. 35:15, 21; Isa. 50:6.

Patience under suffering, Isa. 53:7-9.

Crucifixion, Ps. 22:14, 17.

Gall and vinegar, offer of, Ps. 69:21.

Prayer for enemies, Ps. 109:4.

Cries upon the cross, Ps. 22:1; 31:5.

Death in prime of life, Ps. 89:45; 102:24.
Death with malefactors, Isa. 53:9,12.
Death attested by convulsions of nature, Amos 5:20; Zech. 14:4, 6.
Casting lots for vesture, Ps. 22:18.
Bone not to be broken, Ps. 34:20.
Piercing, Ps. 22:16; Zech. 12:10; 13:6.
Voluntary death, Ps. 40:6-8.
Vicarious suffering, Isa. 53:4-6, 12; Dan. 9:26.
Burial with the rich, Isa. 53:9.

**6. His Resurrection.**

Ps. 16:8-10; 30:3; 41:10; 118:17; Hos. 6:2.

**7. His Ascension.**

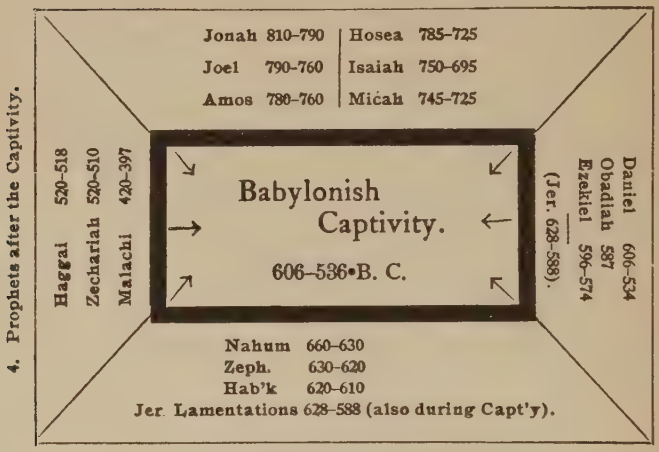
Ps. 16:11; 24:7; 68:18; 110:1; 118:19.
Dominion universal and everlasting, 1 Chron. 17:11-14; Ps. 72:8; Isa. 9:7; Dan. 7:14; Ps. 2:6-8; 8:6; 110:1-3; 45:6, 7.

**8. His Second Advent.**

Ps. 50:3-6; Isa. 9:6, 7; 66:18; Dan. 7:13, 14; Zech. 12:10; 14:4-8.

It is of the greatest help in the study of the Prophets to be able to locate them in their order and the time of their prophesying. In point of fact, there can be no real true study of the Prophets unless this is done. Following is a table of the Prophets based on the Babylonian Captivity.

**A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE PROPHETS.**
**Based on the Babylonish Captivity.**




In concluding this chapter, let it be said that our faith in the promises of God, our belief in the ability of God to fulfill His word, and our firm conviction of the hope beyond, will be strengthened as in no other way by the prophetic study of the Scriptures. Whatever other method we may neglect, let us not neglect this one.